

Egyptian women stage war protest

CAIRO (R) — About 35 Egyptian women burned U.S. and Israeli flags at a sit-in protest against the Gulf war on Sunday. "Ob America gather your money, for tomorrow the Arab people will trample all over you," the women from the leftwing Unionist Progressive Party (UPP) chanted during a three-hour protest at UPP headquarters. The women, who said they would send provisions to Iraqi and Kuwaiti children, included school teachers and actresses. Riot police with batons and shields waited nearby but did not intervene. The sit-in was the latest in a series of protests by small opposition groups against the Gulf war. On Thursday, police used force to disperse opposition leaders and 50 of their supporters when they attempted their first anti-Gulf war march. They urged Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait but said in reference to U.S.-led allied bombing: "What is happening now exceeds the liberation of Kuwait and is an attempt to destroy Iraq, isolate it and degrade it." Writer Fathiya Al Aseel said the UPP would set up a committee to gather donations, baby milk powder, blankets and clothes to be sent to Iraq and Kuwait through the International Red Cross.

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Israel detains 350 Hamas activists

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israel said Sunday it had arrested 350 Palestinian activists of the Islamic resistance movement in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. The army said the activists of the group known as Hamas (Zeal) included Ashraf Banihi of Gaza City, suspected of stabbing to death three Israelis in Jaffa in December. Israel allowed some Palestinians to resume work inside the Jewish state Sunday for the first time in the Gulf war but warned they would suffer for any protest in their home towns. In the West Bank, Palestinians said soldiers trying to enforce a curfew shot dead a 12-year-old boy in Dheisheh refugee camp. Hamas is one of two leading forces behind the 38-month-old Palestinian uprising. A Hamas leaflet issued in the occupied territories Sunday praised Iraqi missile attacks against Israel, saying they made Jews suffer as Palestinians do under Israeli rule.

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Iraq vows to fight to the end

Baghdad: Decision to battle irrevocable

Combined agency dispatches

IRAQ SAID Sunday that the decision to fight the U.S.-led coalition was irrevocable and ruled out any compromise over withdrawal from Kuwait.

"The decision... in Iraq to fight the aggressors and hurry their evil designs... is irrevocable," Baghdad Radio said.

The army newspaper Al Qadisiyah also ruled out any compromise or bargaining in the Gulf, apparently dashing hopes for peace initiatives such as that by Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani.

Al Qadisiyah said Iraq had no intention of compromising on its claim to Kuwait.

"The Iraqi people and army, led by the unique leader Saddam Hussein, will continue to wage the mother of battles to the end," the paper said. "There is no compromise or bargaining... this would impair Iraq's claim to its territorial integrity."

Baghdad Radio said the allied air raids were making Iraqis more determined to fight.

Addressing Arabs elsewhere, the radio said, "the decision made by your brothers in Iraq to fight the aggressors... is irrevocable."

Neither Al Qadisiyah nor the radio mentioned the Iranian peace initiative, but the tone of the commentaries suggested Iraq was not prepared to make concessions.

"If the aggressor believes that its aerial bombardment can affect our people's determination, then he is deluded and has only deceived himself, because his crimes only make us more determined to have justice and the great aims," said Baghdad Radio.

Addressing Iraqis and other Arabs, it said: "Iraq remains Iraq, and the Iraqis remain the same Iraqis you know: Standing tall with their heads high and a confidence in victory that deepens daily."

Al Qadisiyah attacked U.S. President George Bush, French President Francois Mitterrand, British Prime Minister John Major, King Fahd of Saudi Arabia and President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt.

"There is no compromise or bargaining because... in the light of the evil plot of Bush, Mitterrand, Major and their likes... and



A victim of the allied attacks on Iraq in hospital

Allies destroy another bridge on River Tigris

Combined agency dispatches

U.S.-LED FORCES destroyed a suspension bridge and damaged another over the Tigris River that divided the Iraqi capital during air and missile attacks on Saturday night.

The United States lost its first aircraft to Iraqi fire in more than a week when a Marine Corps attack jet was shot down, the U.S. command in Saudi Arabia said Sunday.

Confirming a report by military sources, the command identified the downed plane as an AV-8 Harrier jump-jet. The pilot was missing, it said.

The plane was lost Saturday, it said.

Iraq said the United States and its allies carried out 57 raids, including strikes against residential areas, on Saturday night and

Sunday.

"The enemy last night and this morning sent their planes to conduct 57 air raids against our residential areas or to fire from a distance at some of our (military) units," said Baghdad Radio.

Three of the eight bridges spanning the River Tigris have been completely knocked out in what appears to be a concerted allied campaign to cut Baghdad's transport links to the estimated 500,000 Iraqi troops in southern Iraq and Kuwait.

Correspondents also saw a Baghdad building that had been hit by allied missiles but were not allowed to disclose its location.

Two bridges over the Euphrates were destroyed and a third damaged in allied air attacks near Nasiriyah, about 130 kilometres north of the Kuwaiti border, last Monday.

An Arab military expert based in Baghdad said much of Iraq's military capability remains intact despite the prolonged allied air strikes.

The expert, an attaché with an Arab embassy who requested anonymity, said in an interview with the AP that an accurate assessment of Iraq's remaining military capability is difficult.

He said the air force retains nearly two-thirds of its power despite the fleeing of more than 100 of its planes to Iran and the attacks by the allied warplanes on its airfields.

"The Iraqis will surprise the allies among their things with their formidable air power they managed to preserve despite intensive raids on their air bases," the attaché said.

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House briefed on Ramtha events in private after heated open debate

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A heated debate at the Lower House of Parliament Sunday over disturbances that took place at the border town of Ramtha last week prompted the Prime Minister, Mr. Mudar Badran, to ask for a closed session to "put deputies in the right picture."

Speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyat, and journalists and spectators were asked to leave the gallery.

Earlier in the session deputies

Hosni Al Shuyyeh, Fakhri Kavar, Mansour Murad, Bassam Haddadin and Salim Zou'bi criticised the government's handling of the incident.

"The sons of Ramtha attacked trucks that carried alcohol to American forces in Saudi Arabia," Deputy Shuyyeh said. "They were expressing people's sentiment against Saudi Arabia that boycotts us and the U.S. that attacks our trucks and kills our people."

Deputy Zou'bi from (Ramtha) said that security forces had detained 80 people for investigation

but said all had been released. Mr. Zou'bi defended the people of Ramtha for attacking the trucks, "carrying food, fruits and alcohol for the U.S. forces," and asked "or else, what is the meaning of the House's resolution to strike at U.S. interests?"

Deputy Abdullah Zureikat, reading a statement on behalf of the National Bloc, described the method by which Ramtha's people expressed themselves as "wrong." He said that "some saboteurs" were trying to do

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King says no shift in position, U.S. misinterpreted his speech

From Rania Atalla in Washington

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein said Sunday that Jordan's only role in the Gulf war is as a humanitarian and said he was hurt that the United States had misinterpreted his recent comments as a pronouncement of siding with Iraq.

King Hussein, interviewed on the ABC news show "This Week with David Brinkley," also denied charges that Jordan was a conduit for arms into Iraq.

The King's television interview followed a speech last week in which he bitterly criticised the U.S.-led attack against Iraq.

The speech sparked sharp criticism from President George Bush and prompted a review of U.S. aid in the Kingdom.

A leading member of the U.S. Senate said Sunday the U.S. Congress should not authorise foreign aid to Jordan as long as the war with Iraq continues.

Senator Richard Lugar, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said Jordan should not receive the \$50 to \$55 million in foreign aid because "they are against us."

"I appreciate (King) Hussein, but I appreciate likewise constancy in friendship," Mr. Lugar said in reference to what was considered, until recently, a close U.S.-Jordanian relationship.

Representative Lee Hamilton (D-Indiana), a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and chairman of the House Subcommittee on the Middle East and Europe, said he did not think Congress would approve or reapprove the \$55 million aid to Jordan.

But Mr. Hamilton reiterated what U.S. Secretary of State James Baker told Congress earlier this week, that the U.S. "ought not to be spiteful or vengeful" about Jordan's position. He said among the score of U.S.-Arab relationships with

which Washington would have to address once the war is over, the relation with Jordan would be "among the most difficult."

Members of Congress, the U.S. administration and the media have all reacted rather negatively to Jordan's condemnation of the war against Iraq. Mr. Baker expressed particular concern over the fact that in last week's speech, King Hussein made no reference to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

The King said Sunday he wanted to clarify that he had not mentioned the Aug. 2 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in his speech "having done so millions of times before."

"On principle, and in fact, we have always been against the occupation of territory by war, and their annexation, regarding all the crises in this region, and certainly that applies to Kuwait. And our position has not changed

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Saddam salutes Iraqis' resistance

NICOSIA (AP) — Iraqi President Saddam Hussein Sunday saluted Iraq's resistance to the "warplanes of shame" as he took to the airwaves with an inspirational message to a country devastated by unprecedented aerial bombardment.

President Saddam described the patience and valor of the Iraqi people as "the force of faith on the frontline" in Kuwait, and he said Iraq would emerge victorious, the Iraqi News Agency (INA) said.

The president said the Iraqi people are more determined than ever despite the bombing that began Jan. 17, and he criticised U.S. President George Bush for resorting to warfare instead of forging a peaceful solution to the Gulf crisis.

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Jordan scoffs at Saudi reports

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan Sunday denied reports carried by the Saudi Arabian media that it was exporting ammunition to Iraq for use in the Gulf war.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, quoted a senior government official as saying that Jordanian ammunition reportedly captured from Iraqi troops near Khafji had been exported to Iraq in 1982 and 1983 with Saudi Arabian government assistance via the Saudi Red Sea port of Qadimah.

"Most of the Arab countries, including Jordan, had offered assistance to Iraq in the form of ammunition in the 1980s, but the ammunition allegedly found in Khafji is not used by the Jordanian Armed Forces, a fact which is well known to the Saudi authorities," the official said.

Both Saudi Arabia and Jordan helped Iraq in its war with Iran, a conflict that ended in 1988.

Sunday TV newscasts and the leading newspaper Al Riyadh showed pictures of crates of ammunition marked in English "GHO, Jordan Armed Forces, director of planning and organisation, Amman, Jordan."

Al Riyadh splashed its article and photos in colour across its front page, plus a whole page of photos inside, and referred to arms as well as ammunition.

The alleged arms seizure initially was reported Friday by the Qatari News Agency. Allied military spokesmen have not made statements on the incident.

The Saudi news reports said the munitions were found with Iraqi soldiers captured in Khafji, the northeastern town of Saudi Arabia that they invaded and held for 36 hours last week.

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End assault first, then turn to issue of Kuwait, Iraq tells Iran

By P.V. Vivekanand Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Saadun Hammadi indicated Sunday that his country's reply to an Iranian peace initiative was a call for an end to the allied assault on Iraq before tackling the issue of Kuwait.

Dr. Hammadi, addressing a press conference here, said the response, which he carried to Tehran Saturday, explained that what is taking place is not about the issue of Kuwait. "The issue now is that of U.S. aggression and Zionist and imperialist aggression intended to destroy Iraq," he said.

Although Dr. Hammadi, who was received by His Majesty King Hussein Saturday, did not spell it out it was inherent in his comments that Iraq had informed Iran that the pressing need of the day was to form a joint front to stop the allied assault on Iraq and then to take up the issue of Kuwait in order to settle it at a later date.

"After repelling the aggression (against Iraq), resolving problems

among Muslims will not be difficult, will not be impossible," said Dr. Hammadi in an obvious reference to Iran's call for Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait. He said Tehran would respond to the Iraqi position on its peace initiative after studying it.

It is believed that the Iranian plan, sent to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein by his Iranian counterpart Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani last week, calls on Baghdad to announce its intention to withdraw from Kuwait as the first phase in any peace process. This announcement will come in response to an appeal by Iranian supreme leader Ali Khamenei, along the same lines that the late Ayatollah Khomeini accepted President Saddam Hussein's call for a ceasefire in the Iran-Iraq war in August 1988, according to the initiative, which then goes on the outline six other points involving a mini-Islamic summit and demand for allied withdrawal, deployment of Islamic forces and negotiations.

In his comments Sunday, Dr. Hammadi said despite 24 days of continuous air attacks the Iraqi people remain confident that they would



Dr. Saadun Hammadi

emerge victorious from the confrontation.

Dr. Hammadi said that his country was ready to enter "unconditional" peace negotiations along the lines that the Arab League worked out for the accord which led to peace in

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Velayati: Peace needs more work

Combined agency dispatches

IRAN, WHICH presented ideas to Iraq for an end to the Gulf war, said Sunday that more time was needed before peace could be achieved.

"I think it needs more time and more effort," Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati told the American Cable News Network (CNN) in a satellite interview from Belgrade, Yugoslavia.

Asked to comment on reports that Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani was disappointed with the Iraqi response to Iran's ideas to halt the war, Mr. Velayati said Baghdad's reply was "not on the same level as we had expected."

Mr. Velayati, in Belgrade for a meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), said Iran had hoped for

a peaceful settlement of the crisis. "On the basis of this... we continue our efforts," said Mr. Velayati, describing Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's reply to Mr. Rafsanjani's appeal as "comprehensive."

"We consider it (Iraq's reply) positively... but we have in study it more and more. Rafsanjani is going to reply..." he said.

Iran is neutral in the Gulf war but is as critical of the invasion of Kuwait as it is of the sending of U.S. forces to the Gulf in fight Iraq.

He told CNN that Tehran believed Baghdad had not ruled out a peaceful settlement to the Gulf crisis.

"What we could understand from the message of Saddam was they don't rule out a peaceful settlement (but) if the other side (the U.S.-led allies) insist on war as the only solution to this crisis... they (the Iraqis) are determined to continue the fight," said Mr. Velayati.

The foreign minister said Iran believed the key to a settlement was an

Iranian withdrawal from Kuwait and the withdrawal of foreign forces from the Gulf.

"These two important principles should be included in any peace plan... there are some ideas for peace," he said.

Mr. Rafsanjani criticised Iraq Sunday for triggering the Gulf war by invading Kuwait. But he also attacked the United States for rushing into war against Iraq, saying Washington should have given United Nations economic sanctions more time to work.

In remarks carried by Tehran Radio, Mr. Rafsanjani said U.S. objectives in the region were bound to go beyond driving Iraq from Kuwait otherwise Washington could have solved the Gulf crisis through peaceful means.

"The Americans hurried in starting the military operations. If they had waited several months longer, the

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3-week delay possible in ground offensive

Combined agency dispatches

U.S. MILITARY commanders in the Gulf recommended a three-week delay in launching a ground war to give allied bombers more time to soften up Iraqi troops entrenched in Kuwait, the New York Times reported Sunday.

Quoting unnamed senior U.S. officers, the Times said the recommendations were made to Secretary of Defence Dick Cheney and General Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, during nine hours of meetings in Saudi Arabia Saturday.

At a news conference on Sunday, Mr. Cheney said the United States and its allies could attack Iraqi forces from the ground if allied planes and missiles started running out of targets, but mentioned no specific timetable.

After a day and a half of consultations with U.S. commanders in Saudi Arabia, Mr. Cheney said at least for the moment allied air power was still effective in wearing down Iraq's military machine.

"The capability of U.S. air power to do damage to (Iraqi) forces is still considerable and I think it (the air campaign) will

continue," he said. The Times reported that the consensus of the commanders in the field was that it was too early for a ground campaign against entrenched Iraqi positions in Kuwait.

The newspaper said Mr. Cheney had pledged to pass on the recommendations to President George Bush at briefings this week.

"We want to maximise our firepower and minimise Saddam Hussein's defensive strength, which will take time," an unidentified senior planner told the Times.

Mr. Cheney and Gen. Powell went to Saudi Arabia to ask U.S. military commanders if the time was ripe for a land offensive.

The timing is critical because ground fighting could lead to the kind of heavy allied casualties U.S. politicians fear would undermine domestic support for the war.

One senior Bush administration official, who asked not to be identified, told reporters that a U.S. force of more than 500,000 in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf region was now fully deployed

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Israelis wound 3 in ambush near Nablus

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israeli forces shot and wounded three Palestinians Sunday in an ambush near the West Bank city of Nablus, military sources said.

"In the course of an operation to catch wanted individuals in Askar refugee camp this morning, three locals were wounded from light weapons fire which hit them in the legs," a military source said.

He said the wounded were placed under arrest and taken to hospital for treatment.

Palestinian witnesses said soldiers opened fire in the camp shortly after the army lifted a curfew. Hundreds of refugees came out of their homes after the shooting but the army dispersed them with tear-gas and restored the curfew.

Israel, in an effort to suppress Palestinian demonstrations in support of Iraq, imposed a blanket curfew on the 1.75 million residents of the occupied territories when the Gulf war began.

Palestinians have cheered Iraqi attacks on the Jewish state. Four people have been killed and some 300 wounded by some of the 31 Scuds launched at Israel.

The army has gradually lifted

the curfew and began allowing some Arab workers back into Israel Sunday. Military officials have threatened to reimpose the ban if any violence erupts.

Palestinians said a curfew on three Gaza Strip refugee camps was lifted during the day Sunday but clashes broke out in Bureij camp and the curfew was restored.

The body of a 26-year-old resident of the West Bank village of Burin, also near Nablus, was found Sunday, Palestinian sources said. He was identified as Jamal Dirbas. They said he was kidnapped three days ago by masked activists on suspicion he helped Israeli forces.

A military source said the army issued about 6,000 permits for workers to enter — about five per cent of those who worked in Israel before the war.

But thousands of labourers did not return, apparently because of transport problems and confusion over where curfews were lifted.

At the Erez checkpoint at the entrance to the Gaza Strip, several Israeli buses and employers waited for their workers. About 1,000 showed up, the army said.

Some expressed fear that their jobs had been taken by Israelis,

Parliamentarians hail King's speech to nation

AMMAN (J.T.) — Deputies Sunday hailed His Majesty King Hussein's address to the nation last week, renewed support for Iraq in its war with the U.S. and its allies and demanded extra measures to prepare the country for any eventuality.

Deputy Ziad Abu Mahfouz, an Islamist from Zarqa, said that U.S. President George Bush considered the King's speech as anti-American. "Jordan is for sure against the massacre of Iraqi people," Mr. Abu Mahfouz said. He stressed Jordan will not be intimidated by the American threat to review its aid to Jordan. "He (Bush) might deprive use of \$55

million, but Jordan will stay free and will live up to its principles." He called for a review of Jordan's relations with the U.S.

Amman Muslim Brotherhood Deputy Sheikh Abdul Muneem Abu Zant rejected calls for ceasefire in the Gulf war. "Those who call for ceasefire only weaken our morale and strengthen that of the infidels," he said. Sheikh Abu Zant proposed that Jordan sever its relations with the countries of the anti-Iraq alliance, especially "the head of the snake, America."

He said that Jordanians prefer to die rather than succumb to American pressure over aid to

the Kingdom. Irbid Brntherbnod Deputy Ahmad Konfahi proposed a strategic treaty between the countries that support Iraq and an alliance between Arab and Muslim peoples. He also rejected a ceasefire.

Deputy Deeh Ancees (Brotherhood from Zarqa) said that many young people who wanted to volunteer for the People's Army were rebuffed. "They go time and again to People's Army units, but every time they are told to come back," he said.

Madaba Deputy Abdul Hafiz Elawi, also from the Brotherhood, proposed that Jordan de-

clare its rejection of all Security Council resolutions concerning the Gulf crisis and called on the House to support Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's initiative of Aug. 12 that sought to link all Middle East crises.

Deputy Issa Rimouni, (independent from Jerash) said that Amman that "sleeps on empty stomach is boiling like a volcano." Mr. Rimouni said it was a shame that Iraqi children and women are dying while some Arabs only pay lipservice to their plight.

He said that Arab masses had received the King's address "with all respect and appreciation."

Jordanians sign mass demand for weapons

By Sana Atiyeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — About 100,000 people across the Kingdom have signed a petition to parliament to pressure the government into mobilising the population to defend Jordan against possible aggression or invasion on the country.

With four large stacks of signed papers on a side desk at Zarka Deputy Bassam Haddadin's office in Amman, four deputies Saturday reiterated calls to arm and train Jordanians to prepare them against a threat of Israeli aggression on the Kingdom.

"Due to the continued colonial aggression on Iraqi steadfastness, the increased possibilities of invasion and aggression on the homeland and to strengthen the steadfastness and popular ability to confront any Zionist aggression on our land, the people of Jordan, call on you to live to your responsibility by initiating a government commitment to arm the people in order to defend the homeland," read the petition, which will be delivered to parliament soon.

"The people's calls are constantly being ignored by both the parliament and the government," Mr. Haddadin told a press conference.

The deputy reiterated calls he made in Parliament last week on forming a high council comprising members of Parliament, and cabinet, and union and political leaders to organise a "complete mobilisation of the people."

Mr. Haddadin also suggested to develop the People's Army, which already comprises about 100,000 members and to "enhance the national unity by creating a bearable standard of living and putting a halt to mass dismissal from work."

He said that according to his records, over 700 people were dismissed from their jobs dur-

ing the war and that the government should intervene in protecting the rights of those who were fired.

He also called for forming a new budget — "emergency budget" — for this fiscal year. "This is not the time to build roads or bridges, this is an emergency and the priority should be to strengthen the steadfastness of Jordan by preparing the country and its people to defend this land against any naked aggression," Mr. Haddadin stressed, adding that there were not "even sufficient shelters to protect our civilians if we are attacked."

Mr. Haddadin commended his Majesty King Hussein's address to the nation last week and said that the people agreed with and applauded every sentence he stated.

"This historic position will be registered in the conscience of every Arab and Jordanian citizen," the deputy said. "We would just like to see that position translated into action."

Since the Gulf crisis broke out last August, several deputies and political activists tried to pressure the government into arming the people. The government, in turn, opened the doors of the People's Army for men and women aged between 18 and 54 and opened more training centres across the Kingdom. However, they are not allowed to carry arms in their homes.

"We are not convinced with the reasons given by the government that there is a shortage of light arms for the people. We know understand that we have difficulties, but we also know that there are stocks of arms that can be given to the people," Mr. Haddadin said.

Amman Deputy Mansour Murad said that if the government was "really serious about defending Jordan, they should act upon it."

He added that the state has enough light arms to provide 700,000 people.

Deputy Fakhri Kaware, also a newspaper columnist, said it was obvious that Jordan was "targeted by Israel, the U.S. and its allies," and accused the government and the House for not living up to the expectations and demands of the people.

"We don't want to clash with the government; all we are asking is to provide the people with the means to defend Jordan. We all agree that we want to defend Jordan," Mr. Kaware commented.

"We all have a responsibility to back up the armed forces and the People's Army, and we should be able to have one million of the population become armed soldiers, to create a popular resistance, if we are to defend Jordan rather than just use the rhetoric we hear and see in our local media," Mr. Kaware asserted.

Deputy Husni Shiyah, who also addressed the press conference, said that there was a gap between the "verbal and practical" positions in Jordan, adding that arming the population would "at least act as a form of deterrent against the Zionist expansionist schemes on Jordan."

"All our resources must be poured into being able to defend Jordan. In 1967 the people depended on (late Egyptian President) Jamal Abdul Nasser to achieve victory," Mr. Shiyah said. "Now, at least the people are aware that they must — and they are prepared to — participate in this battle and carry out their responsibilities in gaining victory."

Mr. Haddadin said that such a decision would need a political decision and that their jobs as members of Parliament was only to lobby in Parliament to pressure the government into accepting such decisions.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Syria: Saddam assassination call not state policy

DAMASCUS (R) — An official Syrian newspaper urged Iraqis Saturday to assassinate President Saddam Hussein but a cabinet minister said this was not government policy. "The Iraqi army and the Iraqi people must liquidate him in cold blood so that the killing stops in our beloved Iraq," Al Thawra said in a front-page editorial. But Information Minister Mohammad Salman later told Reuters that Syria, for years a bitter political foe of Iraq, did not believe assassinations could solve political issues. "The determination of the fate of Saddam Hussein is left for the Iraqi people whom we trust and in whom we have confidence in their ability to determine their fate," he said. "Syria opposes assassinations." Syria has about 20,000 troops in the U.S.-led force fighting Iraq. Some went into action against Iraqi soldiers in the Gulf for the first time this week. Al Thawra said the only way to stop the "massacre" of the Iraqi army in an impending ground war was to eliminate President Saddam.

U.S. soldiers ordered to keep rifles unloaded

NORTHERN SAUDI ARABIA (R) — A U.S. divisional commander in the Gulf war has ordered his soldiers not to load their rifles unless on guard duty after a spate of accidental firings, the division's safety manager said. "The word is that we will not lock and load until contact with the enemy is imminent," said Mel Kelder, civilian safety manager of the U.S. army 3rd armoured division. "In the area where we're located now, we're not in danger." Mr. Kelder said divisional commander Major General Paul Funk ordered the safety measures after accidental firings of standard-issue M-16 rifles and other incidents among front-line units. No injuries were reported. Gen. Funk has also ordered all soldiers in the division to attend classes on handling and cleaning the semi-automatic M-16.

Cobra crashes on takeoff

SAUDI ARABIA (AP) — Two crewmen of a U.S. army attack helicopter escaped injury when their craft crashed and burned on takeoff earlier this week. The Thursday crash of the AH-1 Cobra was not combat related. Don Olson, commander of the second Armoured Cavalry Regiment's helicopter squadron, said the accident took place at one of the unit's desert outposts during a pre-dawn training mission. Information about the crash was released Saturday in a pool report. Colonel Olson did not release the names of the crew, who he said were wearing night vision goggles when the crash occurred. The craft apparently drifted sideways during takeoff. "The skid dug into the sand," the helicopter rolled and the aircraft landed on its top," Olson said. The helicopter's load of anti-tank missiles, rockets and gun ammunition exploded in the resulting fire. The Cobra, the oldest in the squadron, had been shot down twice in Vietnam.

Cloud of smoke covers Iran's province

NICOSIA (R) — A cloud of thick smoke, possibly from damaged Iraqi refineries and oil wells, floated over the Iranian border province of Ilam Sunday, the national Iranian news agency IRNA reported. The agency said the smoke was moving north from Ilam, which is level with Baghdad, towards the neighbouring province of Bakhtaran. IRNA, reporting from the Iran-Iraq border, said the "smoke may be caused by the air and missile attacks of the U.S.-led allied forces on Iraqi refineries and oil wells." On Saturday, IRNA said heavy black smoke sweeping from Iraq blanketed the Kordestan provincial capital of Sanandaj and the town of Marivan. Allied planes have been pounding targets across Iraq, including the major oil centre of Kirkuk in the north, 230 kilometres west of Sanandaj, since shortly after the start of the Gulf war on Jan. 17.

Palestinians burned alive in air attack

TUNIS (R) — Planes from the anti-Iraq alliance bombed a bus outside of Kuwait City Saturday, incinerating Palestinian and other passengers, the Palestinian news agency Wafa reported Sunday. Wafa said eight Palestinians were burned alive in the bus travelling on the main highway from Kuwait City to the suburb of Al Ahmadi. Two Palestinian children died after being thrown out of the vehicle. It was the third time Wafa has reported Palestinian victims in Kuwait since the outbreak of the Gulf war Jan. 17. Some 150,000 Palestinians now live in the emirate, forming the largest foreign community.

Mysterious explosion near U.S. ship

ABOARD THE USS NICHOLAS (AP) — The U.S. navy is investigating a mysterious explosion near this frigate that crewmen say was a missile. Mark Walker, a navy public affairs officer, said the frigate was operating near the battleship USS Missouri around 4 a.m. (0100 GMT) on Feb. 4 when crewmen heard a rocket motor overhead. Crewmen said the missile crossed the Nicholas' bow and detonated about 20 metres off the starboard beam. There was a bright flash and lookouts aboard the ship said they felt the heat from the blast. Dennis Morral, the ship's captain, said he initially thought his ship was too close to the Missouri's 16-inch guns. Shrapnel from the explosion hit the ship's superstructure, but there were no injuries or serious damage. The fragments were sent ashore for analysis to determine the type of weapon and its origin. The Nicholas has been on patrol in the northern Gulf since before the war began. It was on anti-aircraft patrol with the battleships Wisconsin and Missouri at the time of the incident.

Palestinian-American charged with murder

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM — A Palestinian-American who was extradited from the United States was charged on Sunday with murder in a 1986 machine gun attack on an Israeli bus. The court formally charged Mahmud Atta with opening fire on a bus carrying Jewish settlers in the occupied West Bank. The driver was killed and a passenger wounded. Mr. Atta, 37, also known as Mahmoud Abed Ahmed, pleaded not guilty, his lawyer, Leah Temel, said. She said that prosecutors presented the charges before a three-judge panel and that Mr. Atta could be sentenced to life if found guilty. Mr. Atta, an American citizen, was arrested by U.S. authorities in 1987. Last August the U.S. supreme court rejected his final appeal against extradition. He has been in Israeli police custody since. Two of Mr. Atta's cousins were convicted of taking part in the attack and were given life sentences.

King

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an iota in that particular regard," the King said.

"What we are against, and what I mentioned in my speech, was my worry and concern as someone who has sought peace and the peaceful solution to this problem from the outset," King Hussein said. "My disappointment is great, and that of the people of Jordan and the Arabs and many in the world, over the fact that instead of peace, there is this terrible war."

"... I do not see why my statement, my appeal for peace, has been so misunderstood and misinterpreted."

On Iraqi missile attacks on Israel, the King said: "Iraq probably feels that it is being struck by the United States. And it's striking at strategic allies of the United States."

Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Lugar were questioned by Brinkley after the interview with King Hussein.

Secretary Baker told CBS-TV's "Face the Nation" programme that Washington was disappointed by King Hussein's statements, but sought to preserve U.S.-Jordanian relations.

"There is no, right now, attractive alternative to that regime, and we've said that for a long time," Mr. Baker said. "Clearly, he's got some extraordinary pressures on him domestically, we understand that, but that doesn't make it any easier when he speaks in the tone and the way he did in that particular speech."

King Hussein said in Sunday's interview Arabs were worried about the meaning of the "new world order" that many observers have said the Gulf war will herald.

"We're very confused about what we feel is special attention paid to one problem and the lack of it on another, not that we have any doubt that the Kuwaiti problem, the Iraqi problem had precedence since it came about the way it did," the King said. "But we need the linkage with something else. We need to know exactly where we are going. We need a commitment to resolve other problems. We need a dialogue."

King Hussein said on reports that Jordan had violated a U.N. embargo on shipments of arms and other material to Iraq were "totally untrue."

"Unfortunately, we don't have the luxury of having so many PR (public relations) firms to put our case across in Washington or in the United States," said the King.

He said the diplomatic rift with Washington has hurt Jordanians. "Our relationship was not based on material considerations," King Hussein said. "We are facing enormous difficulties, but we are not that cheap. And believe me, we are proud to be friends of friends who treat us with mutual respect and who seek to be our friends, and we will be there as always."

"And I hope that all of this will be behind us some day, and I hope for peace in this region and for stability in this region."

Velayati

(Continued from page 1)

serious effects of the economic embargo would have manifested themselves," he added.

An envoy of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev is expected in Baghdad in the next 24 hours carrying a warning of grave consequences if Iraq fails to withdraw from Kuwait, Arab diplomats said Sunday.

They said Mr. Gorbachev's Gulf envoy, Yevgeny Primakov, would not be carrying any initiative.

Iraq

(Continued from page 1)

their agents such as Fahd, Hosni and some of the treacherous and cowardly rulers in the region — this would impair Iraq's right to its territorial integrity that extends from Zakho (close to Turkey) to Kuwait, or its legitimate Pan-Arab role of liberating the people and land of Palestine and

liberating all the Muslim holy places."

The newspaper repeated Iraq's threat to attack the interests of nations participating in the U.S.-led multinational force.

It said "What we want Bush to understand clearly and without any ambiguity is that Iraq's courage and resolve and its arsenal of men and weapons qualify it, or are enough, to achieve victory and to destroy the invaders, their interests, and their agents."

Baghdad Radio also said the United States was withholding information on casualties sustained by its forces in the Gulf.

"Scores of planes are being downed in flames and scores of American and Atlantic pilots are either being killed, captured, or missing. However, the American people know nothing about this," the radio said.

Hammadi

(Continued from page 1)

Lebanon, but he rejected any American involvement in the process.

Dr. Hammadi, a member of the ruling Revolutionary Command Council of Iraq, said he discussed with King Hussein the latest developments in the Gulf war and conveyed Iraq's views and assessment of the situation.

He paid tribute to Jordan's position in the conflict, but refused to be drawn into characterising the Kingdom's stand as "neutral" or supportive of Iraq. But he referred to recent remarks by the King that the war against Iraq was actually a war against the Arabs and Muslims as an indicator of Jordan's position.

The United States contends that the King's remarks meant that Jordan was siding with Iraq. Senior Jordanian officials have categorically denied the charge saying there was no shift whatsoever in the position but the tone and language of the Kingdom had sharpened and become "more straightforward" as a result of the devastating nature of the allied attack on Iraq.

Dr. Hammadi accused the U.S. of "abandoning all efforts for a solution to the problem within an Arab context" and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak of preempting a mini-Arab summit in the early days of the crisis which could have produced an "Arab solution" and of "providing an Arab cover for aggression against Iraq."

"We still support an Arab solution and are ready to enter unconditional negotiations if the U.S. relinquishes its aggressive designs in the region," he said. "Who gave the right to the U.S. interfere in the region?" he asked.

Dr. Hammadi called on Arab countries to extend support for Iraq by severing diplomatic relations with Washington and its allies in the anti-Iraq coalition.

"The least that Arab countries can do on a political level is to boycott diplomatically all countries of the imperialist-Antarctic-Zionist aggression..." Dr. Hammadi told the press conference, the first held by a senior Iraqi official outside Baghdad after the allied forces started war on Jan. 17.

Baghdad severed diplomatic relations with the U.S. and its main partners in the coalition — Britain, Italy, France, Egypt and Saudi Arabia — last week.

Most of Dr. Hammadi's comments during the two-hour press conference on Sunday were reaffirmation and reiteration of known Iraqi positions. He carefully avoided direct answers to several key questions related to Iraqi-Iranian contacts and to the mysterious flight to Iran of over 100 Iraqi warplanes representing the cream of the country's air force.

Although he declined comment on what the strategy was behind the moving of warplanes to Iran saying it was a "military matter," he implied that they could be used at a later stage in the war.

"We are prepared for a protracted war," he said. "And we are ready to continue fighting until final victory regardless of the sacrifices involved."

He also called for a united Islamic front against the U.S.-led coalition saying that joining Iraq "is taking sides between right and wrong, Muslims and Infidels, revolutionaries and reactionaries."

The Non-Aligned Movement, whose ministers are meeting this week, Dr. Hammadi said, "could call for an end to the war and a peaceful settlement on the basis of the principles of the movement and the charter of the United Nations" and should also denounce the allied assault on civilians and civilian installations in Iraq.

Dr. Hammadi rejected Western media suggestions that the morale of the Iraqi army was running low after being subjected to the heaviest air assault in history with some of the most sophisticated weapons ever created and there had been mass deser-

tions from the armed forces. "I want to categorically deny the reports," he said. "There could be a few isolated incidents (of desertions), and perhaps one should also look at the other side (for desertions)."

If anything, he said, "we have millions of volunteers... who want to join the armed forces and fight."

"We are confident of victory in the war," he said. "The morale of the Iraqi people is high... the will of the Iraqi people is strong and we have accepted this challenge," he said. "The aggressor will not go unpunished," he vowed. "We are in agreement (with the allied forces) that the war will be very long..."

He also warned that relations between the U.S. and the Arab World "will not be restored for centuries and those countries (America's partners in the coalition) will remain out of the region for ever."

Dr. Hammadi, who served as speaker of the Iraqi parliament before being named deputy prime minister, said the aerial assaults had caused "thousands of civilian casualties." It was the first official Iraqi acknowledgement of massive civilian casualties since the war began. War communiques have put the figure around 600.

"The aggression is now directed towards widespread destruction of civilian targets and the Iraqi people," he said.

He supported his argument with two examples: In an open desert stretch between Najaf and Karbala, a group of shepherds tending their cattle was "massacred" in air attacks. At least 32 shepherds were killed and the cattle was totally wiped out, he said. Dr. Hammadi also cited repeated attacks on the Al Jounburiya bridge across the Tigris River in Baghdad. The allied forces completed wrecking the bridge on Friday, Dr. Hammadi said that the bridge was "a civilian bridge with no military justification."

Dr. Hammadi, who later flew to Libya on the first leg of a North African tour, said his talks with Arab leaders were aimed at explaining the destructive nature of the allied war on Iraq away from the goal of "liberating" Kuwait and to solicit support for Baghdad.

Directly referring to Egypt and Syria — two of America's staunchest Arab allies in the coalition — Dr. Hammadi said: "The voice of the Arab masses in support of Iraq is not heard since they have no voice, and have no means to express it. In general, 'it will take some time' to (mobilise) the Arab masses who are on the side of Iraq," he said. "They have no reason to... the Security Council resolution which are aimed at the destruction of another Arab country. They should be able to pressure their governments into taking diplomatic action," he said.

Dr. Hammadi rejected the so-called new world order advocated by the United States saying that it would only be a "forum for world domination and subjugation of the developing world through 'imperialism and neo-colonialism in an uglier form in the name of international legitimacy.' And he cautioned the "small poor states to be alert" against the idea since "the equilibrium" in international relations was missing as a result of "the unity of the five permanent members of the Security Council in blatant aggression... by virtue of their interests."

Dr. Hammadi said Iraq was not bothered by Israeli statements that the Jewish state was holding back retaliation for Iraqi missile attacks. "We are in a state of war with Israel; this is well known," he said. "Israel is a major element in this crisis. It has played a great role in pushing the U.S. into war... and is participating in this war."

The minister was asked how Iraq viewed the role of countries which do not necessarily take direct part in the war but extend facilities to the allied forces. He replied: "All forces in the aggression against Iraq will be held equally responsible and they will account for their responsibility sooner or later."

The minister said he had no personal information about a missing crew of the American CBS television network, (some reports have suggested that the four, who went missing last month were caught by the Iraqis). Dr. Hammadi said Saudi Arabia was responsible for the safety of the four since it was from Saudi territory that they went missing.

However, he said, "We respect the media and press, and before the outbreak of the war as well as during the war we have done so and will continue to do so."

In reply to a question on reports that Iraq had denied the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) access to captured allied airmen, Iraq's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Said Al Shabhat told the press conference that an ICRC team was already in Baghdad. Mr. Shabhat accused the allies of ignoring and violating Geneva conventions, and said: "When they start respecting the Geneva conventions, we will also do so."

Cheney

(Continued from page 1)

and ready for battle.

Mr. Cheney said allied air raids may have reduced the strength of some Iraqi army divisions by up to 40 per cent.

"It (Iraq's military) is not the force it was three weeks ago," Mr. Cheney said on route to Washington from Saudi Arabia.

"If you're talking about ground forces, I'm sure you can find some divisions that may be down by as much as 40 per cent. But these are estimates... trying to count the number of tanks and armoured personnel carriers that have been destroyed," he told reporters on his aircraft.

Despite the most concrete public estimate he has given of Iraqi damage, Mr. Cheney said it was clear more damage could be done by coalition bombers before a commitment of ground forces from 700,000 troops to try and drive half a million Iraqi troops from Kuwait.

He said after two days of talks with military commanders in Riyadh that the coalition must not underestimate Iraq, including the potential for an air-raid attempt on Saudi Arabia with chemical or biological bombs.

Mr. Cheney and Gen. Powell made a refuelling stop at a NATO military base in Sigonella where Cheney had a short meeting with Italian Defence Minister Virginio Rognoni.

As he did at a news conference in Riyadh earlier Sunday, Cheney refused to say what he and Gen. Powell might recommend to Mr. Bush.

Earlier Mr. Cheney said that he did not believe a ceasefire in the war would work but that the conflict could end tomorrow if Iraq pulled its troops out of

Kuwait.

"I do not think that any kind of pause or ceasefire is in order," Mr. Cheney told a news conference Sunday. "I do not think it will accomplish anything."

"The war can end tomorrow if (Iraq) will get out of Kuwait. I do not see any other way in which it can end."

In Riyadh, British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd asserted Sunday that Iraq's efforts to sow dissension among the Arab members of the allied coalition clearly have failed.

Mr. Hurd also said the Kuwaiti government has agreed to give Britain about \$1.3 billion topped to help foot the bill for London's involvement in the war.

A spokesman at the Foreign Office in London said it was the first large contribution from Kuwait to Britain.

Mr. Hurd is on a Middle East tour that already has taken him to Egypt for talks with President Hosni Mubarak, and Taif, Saudi Arabia, where he met with the Kuwaiti regime in exile. He met Saturday night and Sunday with his Saudi counterpart, Prince Saud Al Faisal.

Mr. Hurd was asked if the coalition aligned against Iraq risked splitting the longer time goes on without a resolution of the conflict.

"I've not got any such impression," Mr. Hurd told reporters at a news conference.

Bridge

(Continued from page 1)

He said the allies might be underestimating Iraq's military capabilities in the ground, as well.

After six months under a world trade embargo and more than three weeks of relentless allied air

attacks, Iraq's Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) ordered the creation of popular committees with sweeping powers to supervise food distribution.

Decrees by the RCC, headed by President Saddam Hussein, that was published in newspapers Sunday stipulate that a report by any member of the committee was enough to incriminate anyone, without need for a court ruling, boarding supplies.

Government employees or petrol station owners could receive prison terms of up to three years and fines of 3,000 dinars (some \$9,000 at the official exchange rate) for hoarding fuel. Fuel supplies to the public were banned last week.

There has been no electricity and little water in the capital since the Gulf war erupted with massive allied air attacks early on Jan. 17.

One of the three economic decrees allows Iraqis to bring whatever goods they want from abroad without paying import duties or adhering to customs regulations. The apparent aim is to encourage trafficking of goods across the Iran-Iraq border to alleviate shortages caused by the economic embargo on Iraq.

But women said their most difficult daily problem was trying to control their increasingly restless children, who are eating more as food becomes harder to find.

"An hour after having breakfast, the children go on searching in the drawers for chocolates, biscuits or candy," said Suhaila, a mother of five.

"We have stocked enough rice, cooking oil, sugar, and flour, but children, with nothing to do during the day, rather than play football in the street, consume three full meals a day besides in-between snacks," she said.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

PRAYER TIMES

05:01 Fajr
06:19 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:50 Dhuhr
14:53 'Asr
17:20 Maghreb
18:39 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifich Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624990.
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrence Church Tel. 623366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541.
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 628543.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 711331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 715261.

Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 717151.
Armenian International Church Tel. 685326.
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811285.
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817, 654932.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Another rise in temperatures will take place and some clouds appear at different altitudes.

Amman 4/16
Aqaba 9/23
Deserts 2/17
Jordan Valley 7/22
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 32 per cent, Aqaba 31 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Bassam Karadshah 796200
Dr. Raouf Al Mizawi 894788
Dr. Nabil Al Maridi 615338
Dr. Abdul Hadi Tayyem 620115
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 778336
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Najm pharmacy 626372
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 649495
St. Michael's pharmacy 637660

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 637111
Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199

RESCUE

Dr. Radwan Al Saad (—)
Al Sharaa pharmacy 275825
ZARQA:
Dr. Randa Shabin (—)
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 75121
Highway Police 84302
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 63021
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Complaints 121
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 010230
Overseas Calls 623101
Repairs 623101

ABDUL TELEPHONE REPAIRS

Abdul



The Queen hears a briefing about a water project in Deir Alla (Petra photo)

Queen inspects service centres and projects in Jordan Valley

DEIR ALLA (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Sunday toured the Jordan Valley region, visiting the rural areas and listening to officials outlining projects, the agricultural situation and service centres for the local population.

Dr. Abdul Aziz Wishah, secretary-general of the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA), presented a briefing to the Queen about the region's general economic and social development, and accompanied the Queen on a tour of the Deir Alla water project which provides drinking water to the Balqa, Amman, and Zarqa governorates.

The Queen met with directors of departments of agriculture and heads of municipal and village

councils and also with housewives and farmers, hearing their requests and their problems.

The Queen was informed about the problems facing the local community and the shortage in social services from the Deir Alla mayor and local notables.

Accompanied by officials, the Queen later toured villages along the northern and western regions of the valley and visited one of the local households, learning about the family's living, health, and social conditions.

The health centre at M'addi was the next leg of the Queen's tour where she was told that 30,000 inhabitants benefit from the centre's services.

The Queen examined the emergency preparations and the



Her Majesty inquires about living conditions from local inhabitants (Petra photo)

plans taken by the health ministry and civil defence.

Among the other places visited by the Queen was a children's nursery and a nearby charity hazaar which displayed local crafts. The Queen presented the centre with furniture and children's toys and books to be used by the nursery, and the JVA promised to make available a piece of land to the local Jordan Valley Women's Society.

The Queen also toured two model farms producing cucumbers and strawberries and was briefed on modern techniques being followed in farming and vegetable production.

Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) director general, Inaam Al Mufri, who accompanied the

Queen on the tour, said that the NHF will take the proper procedures aimed at introducing improvements to the standard of living of the local people in the area a move that is hoped to contribute towards the overall socio-economic development of the country.

General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS) president, Abdullah Al Khatib, who was present, said that GUVS was offering a donation of JD 4,300 in the name of Queen Noor to buy food supplies and clothing for the needy families in the Jordan Valley region.

The Civil Service Consumer Corporation (CSCC) also announced its contribution of food supplies for the poor families.



Jordanian poets, writers, musicians and various other fine artists march to the U.N. headquarters to protest aggression and destruction of cultural sites in Iraq (Petra photo)

Artists, writers demand halt to destruction of Iraqi culture

By Odeh Odeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordanian artists, intellectuals, writers, musicians, journalists and poets marched in Amman Sunday in a show of protest against the ongoing aggression on Iraq and demanding that the world community stop the war which has killed civilian people and destroyed cultural centres.

The marchers, carrying posters condemning the U.S.-led aggression, handed the U.N. resident representative here, Ali Atiq, a note addressed to the United Nations Secretary-General to stop the brutal aggression.

The marchers, who walked from the Professional Association Complex to the U.N. office in Shamsi, called on the United Nations to shoulder its historic responsibility by acting to arrest the destruction of the cultural heritage in Iraq and the killing of the civilian population.

"We rely on the awareness of the world organisation to stop this vicious conquest and its sinister aims of shaking the foundation of the great human house and land of people and reversing the march of civilisation for the benefit of colonial hegemony," said the note.

The note pointed out that facets of civilisation are being deliberately and brutally destroyed in Iraq, and it is the duty of good men everywhere to work tirelessly to stop this horrible devastation.

President of the Jordan Press Association (JPA), Hashem Hreizat, told the Jordan Times that the U.S. and its allies are committing a barbaric act in Iraq against humankind at large. Hreizat, who took part in the march, appealed to the world intellectuals to stop the massacre committed by the war criminals and those who mock human civilisation and culture.

Among the marchers were playwright Jamal Naji, artist Ahmad Taha Barishi, librarian

Yousef Qandeel and poet Abdul Rahim Omar who presented the memorandum to Atiq on behalf of the marchers.

For his part, Atiq said that the devastating war on Iraq was not a United Nations war on the Arab country, and that the world community has failed in its duty to implement U.N. resolutions concerning the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Following the march, the "Save the Cultural Heritage in Iraq Committee," which organised the protest, distributed the following appeal:

APPEAL

To all cultural organisations in the world including writers, poets, playwrights, musicians, journalists, librarians as well as university professors, architects, plastic artists, and all concerned persons and those who have deep responsibilities for the protection of human culture throughout history.

The Iraqi cultural sites including those in Baghdad, Ninawa, Babylon, Najaf and the rest of the archaeological and historical treasures are now exposed to a brutal and inhuman bombardment on the part of the U.S.-led military coalition in the Gulf.

The great heritage of Iraq along the Tigris and Euphrates rivers is not the sole ownership of Iraq but it is rather the property of the whole human family and mankind.

The world seems totally oblivious of the fact that this unprecedented destruction of the cultural treasures of Iraq by Cruise missiles and B52 bombers is continuing unabated.

The destruction, which means the loss of these treasures that relate human culture, has no parallel in world history even under the Nazis who invaded Paris in the Second World War, avoiding the city's cultural centres.

President Mitterrand of France as well as the American president and the British prime minister have to remember all this since

their nations are actively involved in this alliance, waging aggression on Iraq and its great cultural heritage.

Jordanian intellectuals appeal to all lovers and advocates of human culture to raise their voices and call for an immediate ceasefire in the Gulf and a halt to all the horrible destruction of cultural sites which had survived for more than 7,000 years under the Assyrians, Chaldeans, Accadians and others, and have been preserved by the Iraqi people throughout the years.

We look to all world intellectuals as a highly influential power, calling on them to organise an international campaign for saving the Iraqi cultural heritage before it is too late, and before the destruction of the treasure becomes a lasting reality.

House refers 29 requests to government

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Lower House of Parliament Sunday approved two bills and referred 29 requests from various deputies to the government to consider.

The two bills contained minor amendments to standing laws.

The requests included demands by various deputies for increased government services for their constituencies. One deputy, Faisal Al Jazi, from the South Bedouins asked that his home town of Al Hussein be administratively upgraded and provided with an office for family affairs, a rural development centre, a veterinarian clinic, a department of lands and surveys, a courthouse, a water authority office, an electricity authority office and housing units for the tribes of Tagat-qah and Nowjrah.

Earlier in the session, the House reviewed a letter from the Ministry of Planning detailing the history of the Private Enterprise and Technical Resources Assis-

EC grants \$45.5m to Palestinians in occupied territories

AMMAN (J.T.) — The European Community (EC) has decided to allocate a grant of \$45.5 million for the Palestinian population in the Israeli-occupied Arab territories, according to an announcement here by EC ambassador to Jordan, Christian Falkowski.

The ambassador said that the aid will be used for the purchase of 26,300 tons of wheat, 4,600 tons of milk powder, 3,100 tons sugar and 1,700 tons of vegetable oil and nearly \$8 million will be utilised for the purchase of other products and to cover the transport costs of this aid.

The aid is geared to cover the food requirements of the Palestinians stemming from the difficulties of supply and realising the considerably reduced income for the Palestinians as a consequence of the curfew, and will be distributed through UNRWA, Falkowski noted.

He said the Commission has decided as well to provide \$14 million as medical emergency aid for the Palestinian population living in South Lebanon. This aid will be implemented through Medecins du Monde and Medecins sans Frontieres for the supply of medicaments, equipment and medical personnel to meet the urgent needs of the Palestinian population living in South Lebanon.

The European Commission had already provided \$6.2 million to finance the operating costs of Palestinian hospitals in the occupied territories for the coming six months. This aid is filling the gap which had been left by the withdrawal of financial support of traditional sponsors affected by the Gulf crisis as well.

Parliamentarians explain dangers

Cypriot minister esteems peaceful role of Jordan on Gulf, Palestine

AMMAN (J.T.) — The foreign minister of Cyprus, George Iacovou, Sunday voiced his government's appreciation of the endeavours being exerted by His Majesty King Hussein to help bring about peace in the Gulf and said that non-aligned nations and Cyprus hope that the Palestine and the Gulf questions can be settled by peaceful means.

"We feel that Jordan is going through very difficult circumstances because of the war in the Gulf," the minister said at a meeting with Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Abdul Latif Arabiyat.

"The fact that Jordan is not represented in the upcoming Belgrade meeting of non-aligned countries' foreign ministers prompted me to come to Amman and learn about Jordan's views with regard to the Gulf crisis specially since King Hussein has been playing a peaceful role from the start," the Cypriot foreign minister said at the meeting which was attended by deputies and a number of officials.

For his part, Arabiyat pointed to the dangers inherent in the continuing aggression on Iraq and the destruction of the Iraqi people and their cultural and economic infrastructure. Arabiyat also noted that the allied forces have been waging an economic war on Jordan and trying to mar the Kingdom's image as a neutral

state seeking a peaceful and just solution to the Gulf issue.

The House speaker urged Cyprus to play an effective role in the Belgrade meeting to end the war, and urged the foreign minister to convey to his government Jordan's desire to maintain very strong ties of cooperation and friendship with the Cypriot people.

Iacovou, Sunday met with Speaker of the Upper House of Parliament and said that his country backs the idea of an international conference for a just peace in the Middle East.

He said that war can achieve no solution but can rather result in further destruction and more suffering for innocent people.

"Cyprus has always expressed its full support for the Palestinian people's struggle to regain their legitimate rights in Palestine," the foreign minister said.

Lawzi for his part said that Jordan seeks peace and the implementation of international legitimacy to settle all problems.

"The absence of justice and a just solution for the Palestine problem have exposed the Middle East to continued tension and wars," Lawzi said at the meeting which was attended by House members.

He said that the Non-Aligned Movement can play an effective role in bringing about peace and in ending the aggression on Iraq.



Cypriot Foreign Minister George Iacovou holds discussions with the speaker of the Upper House (above) and the Speaker and other Lower House parliamentarians (below).



Symposium on water, air pollution opens Wednesday

AMMAN (J.T.) — A symposium on the dangers facing the environment as a result of the Gulf war and oil slicks will open at the Royal Cultural Centre in Amman Wednesday during which three main working papers on these topics will be reviewed by specialists.

Representatives of the Jordanian Society for the Protection of the Environment from Pollution, concerned government ministries and organisations will take part in the meeting, which will be chaired by the society's president Ahmad Obeidat.

Dr. Abdullah Touqan, president of the Higher Council for Science and Technology, will submit a working paper dealing with the serious effects of burning oil on the climate and water.

Engineer Abdul Hay Salloom will present a paper on oil econo-

mics and Dr. Murad Bino will submit a research paper on water pollution and dangers to water animals, while engineer Munir Adham will discuss a national programme for increasing awareness of the pollution of the environment.

The symposium was prompted by the ongoing aggression on Iraq which has caused heavy pollution to the sea water and the atmosphere. Latest reports from the Gulf said that at least 500 million gallons of oil have been split into the sea following the allied air raids on Kuwait oil fields. The oil slick has forced Saudi Arabia to shut down one of its desalination plants and announce that it might have to ration drinking water.

Saudi Arabia gets two thirds of its water from desalination plants, half of it from the one of

the coastal city of Jubail which is now threatened by the oil slick.

Dr. Touqan told the Jordan Times recently that the oil slick in the northern Gulf region cannot be easily stopped. He said that the burning of the oil slick makes the cleaning procedure much harder and puts forward the question of how easily it is to put out a blaze of such magnitude.

These and other related topics will be dealt with at the symposium on Wednesday according to a society official.

The society, formed three years ago to help spread awareness among Jordanians about the need to protect the environment, groups 500 members of engineers, experts, and other personalities interested in or with knowledge of means of combating pollution.

Bishop assails U.S., U.N.

AMMAN (J.T.) — Bishop Elias Khouri Sunday criticised the United Nations Security Council, saying that it has become an obedient tool in the hands of criminal America and its arrogant and inhuman president.

In a Sunday sermon, which he delivered at the Anglican Church in Amman, Khouri said the U.N. Security Council resolutions, which President Bush has confiscated without any just grounds, do not allow the American-led alliance to bombard the Iraqi cities and towns, because these places are not Kuwait.

Khouri called on Arab countries, which call themselves the "steadfastness and confrontation countries" to live up to their responsibilities and to realise that the Arab and Islamic nations are targets for the hostilities currently being launched against Iraq.

He called on them to stand by Iraq in its heroic struggle to repulse the U.S.-led aggression against the Iraqi people.

The American aggression against Iraq has exposed the forces of infidelity, atheism and brutality, and have drawn a divisive line between those and the forces of faith and humanity, Khouri stressed.

He emphasised that adherence to righteousness, justice and peace means obeying God's will and deviation from this path means failure to obey God and to serve humanity.

Those who deviate from righteousness and justice and disobey the will of God will not escape the punishment of God, and the faithfuls, Khouri noted.

He added that Arab Muslims and Christians have attitudinal faith in God, and would not be shaken by the forces of evil and injustice.

Khouri praised the steadfastness of the Christians in the occupied Arab territories, who held in the face of the fiercest Israeli measures against them.

He also said that forces of evil in the East and West have planted immigrant aliens in the land of holy places in Palestine to spread corruption and atheism and to force the steadfast and faithful people out of their homeland.

Such forces, who harbour hatred for and grudge against Arabs and Muslims, are now launching their rockets and targeting their bombs at the civilians in Iraq in a bid to destroy the Iraqi people.

He called on Arabs to cling to their rights and to stand by their Iraqi brethren in fighting the American and Western and all other forces of evil.

Parliament pledges full support for Iraq

AMMAN (Petra) — Speakers of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament Ahmad Al Lawzi and Abdul Latif Arabiyat, Sunday received the Iraqi National Assembly's delegation, headed by Ghanem Aziz, the House's deputy speaker.

Lawzi pledged Jordan's full support for Iraq in its defensive war against the U.S.-led alliance. He noted that the battle Iraq is fighting now on behalf of the whole Arab Nation is a war for defending the Arab entity and Arab history.

Lawzi praised the heroic struggle of the Iraqi army and people, saying that they are countering the Zionist attack, which is aimed at annihilating Arab existence.

Arabiyat said Jordan, by supporting Iraq, was supporting itself because Iraq was defending the Arab rights.

He pointed out that history will record Iraq's historic stance, and its defence of Arab dignity, culture and history.

Head of the Iraqi delegation, said on a visit to Jordan, praised Jordan's pan-Arab stands, saying it reflected Arab aspirations and hopes. He said that Iraq would not be begging anybody to organise a ceasefire because Iraq would not compromise on its principles and goals, however dear the sacrifices might be.

He noted that Iraq's initiative of Aug. 12, is the right initiative for establishing peace in the region.

He added that the delegation

would visit a number of Arab countries to prepare for a pan-Arab parliamentary conference to be held in Algeria.

The meeting was attended by Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs and members of the emergency committee at both houses.

In the meantime the Lower House's Legal Committee held a meeting Sunday under the chairmanship of its rapporteur, Mohammad Abu Fares, and discussed the provisional revised law of Amman Municipal Court, and approved it. The committee also discussed and approved a provisional revised law on labour.

At the end of the meeting, they issued a joint communique, in which they called on all Arabs and Muslims and on free people all over the world to condemn the unjust war, launched by the United States and its allies, including the collaborating Arab and Muslim countries who succumbed to the American will, against Iraq.

It also stressed adherence to Iraq's Aug. 12 initiative for finding just and comprehensive solutions to all problems in the region, including the Palestine problem.

The communique said all the region's issues are inseparable and should be dealt with by the same standard.

The communique called on Arab and Islamic nations to break the restrictions and remove handcuffs imposed on them, preventing them from taking any action in support of their brethren in Iraq. It further stressed that Zionism is a major partner in the colonial plan aimed at destroying the growing Arab might of Iraq. It noted that the aim of the aggression is to further strengthen Israel and to make it the dominating power in the region, and that is why Israel has always been instigating America to launch the war against Iraq, and to block all avenues leading to a peaceful settlement, including an inter-Arab dialogue to settle the crisis, and the Iraqi president's initiative of Aug. 12.

Representatives of both Houses also rejected the U.S. call for establishing the so-called "new world order," which is primarily aimed at dominating the region and controlling the future of the Third World nations.

Both Houses said that the course of events in the war has so far shown that the aim of the war was not to liberate Kuwait or to defend Saudi Arabia but to destroy the Iraqi power. Kuwait's liberation was only a pretext. The communique also called on all Arab and Muslim nations and the Non-Aligned Movement to reject the UN Security Council resolutions, particularly Resolution 678, because the USA and its allies have taken these resolutions as a cover for attacking the Iraqi people, and destroying its economic, cultural, and scientific infrastructure.

Artists exhibit works at Shoman Foundation

AMMAN (J.T.) — Over 35 Jordanian artists have contributed a number of their works for an exhibition which was opened Sunday at the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation gallery.

Proceeds from the exhibition which runs through Feb. 25, 1991, will go towards assisting Arab civilian victims of the war in the Gulf.

INVITATION

To all news correspondents, representatives of local and foreign media to join in and cover our march, which will be held Tuesday Feb. 12 at Karak Governorate, as a gesture of support for Iraq.

The march, which is organised by popular forces in Karak Governorate will start after the noon prayer from Mashhad at Mutha and end in Mazar.

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Cheney's other tune

DICK CHENEY, the U.S. defence secretary, ended his visit to American troops in Saudi Arabia, apparently with dual vision. In one eye, he seems to have seen an enormous Iraqi military machine that was being eroded. In the other eye, Cheney saw an Iraqi capability that could spring at his men and their machines some heavy surprises. He, in any case, refused to divulge what he would be reporting to his president, although the New York Times was quoting American generals yesterday as saying Cheney might ask George Bush for a three-week delay in starting a ground war against Iraq if a decision to that effect was already taken.

Television viewers who watched the defence secretary give his press conference last night could have noticed the man's sombre look as he talked about Iraq's military capability. Someone might have even put words in his mouth: "What a mess we have got ourselves in."

Cheney, probably for the first time, ventured to talk about that which the Iraqis still have their sleeve in terms of military strategy. Their air force remains capable of hitting American troops and Saudi Arabia, in suicide attacks, with mass destruction weapons, and even in regular missions. Iraq's missile attacks can continue. Guerrilla operations can be organised. And, more importantly perhaps, Baghdad may itself decide to use its army's strength on the ground and launch a land war against the Americans.

TV viewers, at least in Jordan, did not hear Cheney speak about other possibilities; like gas and other types of bombs that the Iraqis have been reported to possess; and attacks on oil resources, which carry with them even greater threats of ecological disasters; and shifting alliances as the war drags on, for example Iran allowing the use of Iraqi aircraft to strike at Israel if the Jewish state decided to retaliate against missile attacks by Iraq. Equally important, we think, the Pentagon chief did not talk about the possibility of his own country using thermo-nuclear and neutron bombs against Iraq.

Of course, we do not expect Cheney, or any other American official, to talk about anything or everything that his country and coalition face in the Gulf. But we do think it is absolutely necessary for the Bush administration to start telling the American people what might be in store for them should this war continue or escalate into the foreseeable future.

That effort, whereby the U.S. public was informed of the potential consequences of war just before it actually erupted, seems to have been largely abandoned since Jan. 17. With Cheney's remarks yesterday, however, it looks like unpalatable or pessimistic scenarios will have to be uncovered and studied once again, if only because the American and European public will have to be informed of what is actually at stake for them.

It is true that Iraq is not saying much (if at all) about what it still has in terms of defence capabilities. It is equally true though that the Iraqis appear to be a long way away from facing defeat or getting desperate. But does that mean the American generals and officials can afford to mislead or disinform their own public, and the whole world, on what is actually happening or impending for much longer? And what about the inexplicable complacency of the "fair," "objective" and "informative" Western media on this issue.

We think it is in everybody's interest to look into what might happen if this war drags on and escalates. We think such an effort will be infinitely more useful than just assuming, "America will win and that is it." Maybe it will be worth listening to Cheney from now on.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily Sunday called attention to a conspiracy being hatched against Jordan by two Arab countries and Israel and warned of a possible direct aggression on the Kingdom. The paper said that the three parties had earlier alleged that oil tanker trucks carrying Iraqi crude oil to the Kingdom were transporting missiles, but this allegation was soon foiled when the allied forces raided the trucks and ascertained that they carried crude oil. Now the three parties are alleging that Jordanian weapons and ammunition were found in Khafji which was attacked by the Iraqi forces, and that Jordan was participating in the attacks on Saudi targets, the paper noted. It said the new allegation is designed to pave the ground for a direct Israeli aggression on the Kingdom, and help the Jewish state achieve its dream of a greater Israel at the expense of Arab lands. The perpetrators of this criminal scenario, the paper added, should realise that Jordan continues to work for an end to the conflict in the Gulf because it opposes violence of any kind, that no hostile propaganda campaigns can deter the Kingdom from defending its soil and exposing the conspiracies against the Arab Nation, and that the Jordanian people and armed forces are determined to abort any aggression against the homeland. Those conspiring against the Kingdom, it said, should realise that any aggression is bound to be resisted not only by the Jordanian people themselves, but by Iran which expressed support for the Kingdom and by all nations concerned with safeguarding peace and security in the region.

A columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily believes that the U.S.-led aggression on Iraq could not have happened five years ago when the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact constituted a rival for the United States and a deterrent force preventing Washington from pursuing its ambitious designs at will. Abdul Rahim Omar says that the presence of another superpower over the past four decades encouraged some European countries, especially France, to follow an almost independent policy from that of the United States.

Thomas A. Dine: America's true president

By Izzat Dajani



Percy was portrayed as anti-Israel, a very serious accusation in a nation that is hostage to the whims and whims of its Jewish minority people. The eventual outcome was Percy's defeat and loss of his Senate seat in the 1984 elections. "All the Jews in America, from coast to coast, gathered

one of the most important functions of the Israeli lobby. The irony here lies in the fact that Arab states pay for U.S. weapons in hard currency from their own treasuries. This serves U.S. business interests, aids the balance of payments, generates more needed work in the military and allied industries, supports extended research and technological advancement, and curtails unemployment. However, by denying Arabs the ability to purchase arms from the U.S.A., they are obliged to take their orders and the attached benefits to other

and the good many Americans are forced to rationalise their own interests for those of Israel. Thanks of course to AIPAC and President Dine. It is interesting to note here that weapons sold to Israel are invariably purchased with money that the United States has either lent or given Israel from the U.S. treasury.

The power that pro-Israeli groups, particularly AIPAC, exercise in the American government is expressed through the electoral system. According to David Mayhew the raison d'être for any politician is to be elected and winning an election requires money and votes. Organised pro-Israeli groups have been able to deliver both in quantities far greater than their numerical size would suggest. Jews in the United States constitute under 3 per cent of the population, but the influence they exert over the whole population is tremendous. Jews terrorise the whole population of American politicians by the dogma of being labelled anti-semitic. In the 1984 presidential campaign, George Bush, then vice president, spoke before a Jewish audience in Washington and castigated the three democratic contestants for the pre-

his re-election as president. George Bush owes a tremendous lot to the Jewish interest groups as ostensible in his behaviour and attitude towards Arab rights. It is a mockery in Bush claims otherwise as it will be a flimsy pretence. When George Bush speaks, his lips and tongue are those of Thomas Dine. When he thinks, it is Dine's brain. It is like a theatre where the audience watch, the "doll" acting and talking, but the total control is carried out by the professional "ventriloquist." This is the Bush-Dine arrangement. So when Americans voted for George Bush, they in fact elected their President Non-Elect Thomas A. Dine.

Americans are basically simple and nice people. They are often accused of being naive. American Jews are amenable to most misfortunes in the American society. What Jews don't like, they label as American. What they approve of and see advantages in, they call Jewish. The American society is slowly waking up from its deep sleep. Good Americans are constantly realising the damning facts of the negative influence by those Americans only in nationality and Jews in heartened interest. It is only when Jews in the U.S. consider themselves Americans first and last, and Judaism is their religion, that we can say their assimilation in the American society is proper and complete. Anti-semitism is a ludicrous tool to be constantly used to destroy many good people, and many good Americans in an increasingly intelligent society! According to Dr. C. Rubenberg: "United States policy in the Middle East is frequently contradictory, often incoherent, and increasingly skewed to such a degree of pro-Israeli bias that U.S. national security interests seem, in practice, to be defined by Israeli national interest."

Dine's telephone calls were either making or breaking people. Anyone with any reservations or even second thoughts in offering blindfolded support to Israel would not see the light of day as far, at least, as his political ambitions were concerned. Charles H. Percy was the best living example to this abhorrent AIPAC method.

this was not good enough! To Thomas Dine, if you were not entirely pro-Jewish and pro-Israel, you were regarded as the enemy. There were no half measures. Dine decided to mobilise the full national resources of the pro-Israel campaign against Percy, and in favour of Paul Simon. Senator

to oust Percy. And American politicians, those who hold public positions now, and those who aspire, got the message. "Dine commented afterwards.

The implementation of the Israeli government's opposition to the sale of U.S. weapons to Arab countries is

'United States policy in the Middle East is frequently contradictory, often incoherent, and increasingly skewed to such a degree of pro-Israeli bias that U.S. national security interests seem, in practice, to be defined by Israeli national interest.'

countries particularly in Europe. This is in complete betrayal of U.S. national and strategic interests as America

identity, for failing to issue strenuous condemnations of anti-semitism. It worked, obviously, as Jews helped Reagan in

LETTERS

Mind-boggling logic

To the Editor:

I would like to take the opportunity to say how totally absurd I find the complaints being voiced by many Western journalists about not being allowed into Iraq, and about those who are there not having freedom of movement. From the comments made by, for example, those in the CNN studios to dilute any effect made by the sight of civilian casualties and damage — even when assured, as they were by Mr. Ramsey Clarke this week, that he had freedom of movement and saw only civilian casualties — it is a wonder to me that their representatives are given as much rein as they are. Jordanian truck drivers killed by "allied" forces are reported as "allegedly killed by allied forces," while Israeli reports and others are taken at face value, or if not, are certainly not graced by the word, "allegedly," every time. Is the implication that we killed our own people and put them there to make the saintly "allies" look less than squeaky clean? And as if that were not enough, CNN (again for example) produces what the network calls its "Islamic expert," only to discover that this man is but an "Israeli" professor from Jerusalem. How very objective?

When the reporting is less slanted, then maybe one will be able to listen to requests for more access with some complacency — and I would like to ask whether Tel Aviv would allow in our Iraqi network (with, of course, free access), or how many Argentinians the English allowed "on the spot," to report on the Falklands war. Would American reporters have expected to run around Berlin or allowed German nationals to do so in Washington in WW II? No, in fact the U.S. put all Japanese (even those who were U.S. nationals) in camps — as the British have now seen fit to do with Iraqi nationals in the U.K. who were there as students ... and then they demand free access to report on and travel through a country which they are making war on! The mind boggles at the logic!

Alia Al Hussein,
Amman.

The genuine leaders

To the Editor:

Since Iraq seized Kuwait on Aug. 2 and the events that followed, I realised that many people found in president Saddam Hussein a true and genuine leader for various reasons, but mainly because his actions and reactions coincided with those of the Arab people.

For example, people here on any given day would talk about wishing that President Saddam would do or say a certain thing only to find that he fulfills their wishes shortly after the expectations of the people were expressed ... as if the hopes were heard by him.

His Majesty King Hussein proved to be another true and genuine Arab leader in his courageous and clear position during his address to the nation, fulfilling the expectations of his people.

Since the beginning of the U.S.-led military aggression on Iraq on Jan. 17, the majority of people in Jordan were feeling frustrated and helpless due to their inability to help their brethren in Iraq, besides just donating money, medicine and milk or to demonstrating and protesting in the streets or expressing solidarity with Iraq in the media.

His majesty's speech came at a time when it was most needed to prove that all of Jordan from the palace to the street are wholeheartedly with Iraq and its people, regardless of any consequences, if only because everybody realises that President Saddam and the Iraqi people are not fighting a war just to defend Iraq, but indeed to defend the whole Arab and Muslim world.

If we agree that genuine and true leaders are those who honestly represented the aspirations of their people, we wonder how genuine and true are those leaders of the U.S. led coalition against Iraq towards their own people.

Mohammad Atiyeh,
An Arab Jordanian citizen.

Equitable sharing of views

The Secretary of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Abdullah Bishara wrote a letter to the International Herald Tribune in which he said that Jordan unwittingly contributed to the present disaster by pandering to the self-delusion and the incurable egotism of the Iraqi president. He accused Jordan of being "the hands of its benefactors and scoffed at its patrons."

Senator Omar Nabulsi replied to Bishara's accusations through another letter to the same publication. The following is the text of his letter as made available to the Jordan Times.

I have few corrections and remarks to make on Mr. Abdullah Bishara's letter to the editor titled 'Jordan's awkward stance,' published on Jan. 30.

Jordan opposed the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait at the very outset, whilst working for a peaceful resolution of the crisis. Jordan has always been against the acquisition of territory by war, and hence its stance against the occupation and annexation of Arab territories by Israel.

Furthermore, Jordan sought to bring about an Arab solution. This Arab solution was to be within the Arab League and also within the wider framework of the United Nations.

His Majesty King Hussein obtained a commitment from Iraq to withdraw within the first two days of the invasion as well as an agreement to attend a summit in Riyadh to try and address Iraqi grievances. It was not the first and was not to be the last effort. Jordan's King and government have tried tirelessly to avert war and are now relentlessly trying to stop the war.

Jordan's Crown Prince Hassan has been very outspoken against war and has been a vehement, tireless and I must add, eloquent and brilliant advocate for peace. I am proud to say that his voice echoes that of the nation at large.

We, Jordanians have not been strangers to war. We know first hand the amount of pain and suffering that wars bring about. We share the largest confrontation front with Israel and we have carried the burden of protecting the eastern Arab flank since 1948. It is within this spirit that Jordan received contributions from Arab countries, including Kuwait, which Jordan used primarily towards safeguarding Arab territorial sovereignty, peace and stability in the region.

It is also within the spirit of Arab interdependence and Arab solidarity that our citizens worked very hard in Kuwait to help build that small nation.

If we Arabs lost the West Bank to Israel in 1967, it was not due to the lack of courage or ability on our part. Had Kuwait contributed to Arab defence then one hundredth of what it has contributed so far to the allied war effort, then it would have been possible for the Arab World to retain the West Bank.

The lack of awareness of Arab interdependence is still manifest in Mr. Bishara's thinking, which he now compounds by groundless allegations. Jordan contrary to what Mr. Bishara states, has completely complied with Security Council Resolution 661 imposing sanctions on Iraq. Within this context, the secretary general's special representative M. Jean Ripert concluded in his report to Mr. De Cuellar that Jordan should be granted waiver from application of sanctions against Iraq in as far as the importation of oil and its derivatives is concerned. This was ratified by the Security Council in September 1990. There is nothing in the U.N. Charter that requires a state to commit economic suicide in order to apply sanctions directed against another state.

Moreover, Jordan does not export Iraqi oil to any third country, and Iraq does not gain from the transaction, which is in lieu of outstanding debts owed to Jordan by Iraq.

By the time this war is over the region will have undergone great changes. Let us hope that some of the changes will include a more equitable sharing of wealth in the Arab World and that the secretary of the Gulf Cooperation Council would have by then, understood the basics of Arab interdependence in his review of Kuwait's position and future role in the Arab World and its bilateral relations. May I add that I am not surprised at Mr. Bishara's letter. It is precisely such thinking and attitude that contributed largely to the present tragic situation.

Omar Nabulsi,
Member of the Upper House of Parliament,
former Minister and Ambassador.

Whiter than white?

To the Editor:

PERMIT me to reply to British Ambassador Anthony Reeve's letter of Feb. 7, 1991, printed in the Jordan Times, concerning the detention of Iraqis and Palestinians in the United Kingdom.

Contrary to what he wrote that "on the outbreak of hostilities all these detainees became protected persons under the terms of the Fourth Geneva Convention," and that "Britain's obligations are being fully met," as well as statements made by the British government regarding civilian detainees and their right to appeal their detentions, I would like to inform him of the following.

Prior to the publicity surrounding the policy of the British government to detain certain Arab nationals, a number of Iraqi nationals had already been rounded up and detained in Pentonville Prison. The reason I know of this was that on Jan. 23, 1991 a group of approximately 11 Iraqis were deported from London to Amman. On that Royal Jordanian flight, accompanying my children, was a fellow British subject who recounted the following.

"Approximately eleven men boarded the plane carrying little transparent plastic bags bearing the name HM — Pentonville Prison. Two of them sat down next to me, one of whom was very, very distressed. He started talking to me and explained that he had been picked up off the street, arrested, told that he was a prisoner of war and taken off to Pentonville Prison. He said that he and about 200 of his fellow countrymen had been held in Pentonville Prison. They had been kept locked in individual cells for over 14 hours a day, not allowed access to basic facilities and were obliged to relieve themselves in the cells. It was only after 10 days that these conditions were improved when the International Red Cross gained access to them, after which they were allowed out to exercise. This man, who had lived in the United Kingdom for eight years, was on the verge of tears not only because his wife and children who had had to seek refuge in a mosque, were still in the U.K., but because he just could not understand why this had happened to him, that he had done no wrong and had never been involved in politics.

The other Iraqi, a doctor, explained to me that he had been arrested at the hospital where he worked while he was examining a patient. Both of them could not believe that such things could happen in Britain and that the British authorities could behave in such a manner. They were more shocked by this than by the fact that they had been held in degrading conditions in prison and arbitrarily deported from the U.K., without recourse to appeal. They had no idea why they had been arrested but that they were Iraqis."

I believe it would be dishonest on our part, as British subjects, to believe that we are whiter than white and that our human rights behaviour in times of war would always be far superior to our adversaries. I regret that this is the impression that Mr. Reeve's letter gave to the reader.

By coincidence Amnesty International issued a statement on Feb. 8 which I would like to quote from: "In times of war, governments often tend to sweep human rights aside in the name of political or military expediency." Following on from this Amnesty talk of the detainees presently held in the United Kingdom stating this to be "contrary to international standards," and that Amnesty believes some of these detainees were held in custody purely because of their nationality. However, in response a Home Office spokesman was quoted as saying "... that all detainees have the right to appeal to a panel." This has obviously not been the case.

It is obviously impossible for the truth to be known now when this present policy of the British government is based on security issues, but I do hope we will not be shamed when the full facts are known one day.

Barbara Woods,
Amman.

A hand of friendship

To the Editor:

At this time of war I am stretching out my hand of friendship to my Arab brothers. I would like to correspond with Arabs of all ages in Jordan Times.

Hold out!

W. Kaiser, Attenburg Str. 29,
800 München 60, West Germany

House

(Continued from page 1)

harm to the country's security. He also said that a certain group, which he did not name, had infiltrated the ranks of innocent protesters.

Deputy Theeb Marji, who said he was in Ramtha during the trouble, described the National Bloc's statement as "misleading." He said he did not agree with the bloc's charge that "dirty bands, plots and planted elements" were behind the events.

"I demand that security forces and the media expose the facts. If anybody is trying to endanger the security of the country, he should be executed."

Deputies Faris Nabulsi agreed with Mr. Marji and Mr. Zou'bi and described the National Bloc's statement as "irresponsible."

Deputy Qassem Obeidat defended the bloc's statement and said some elements were demanding that Jordan's border with Syria and Saudi Arabia be closed. He said that on Saturday there were demands for the opening of a war front with Israel.

Mr. Obeidat said he felt there was an intention to "sabotage the country from within."

At this point the prime minister intervened. He said he was at a loss how to "explain the real picture." He indicated that deputies on both sides of the divide did not know what was really happening. Some know some angle of the story, others know other angles, he said. "I have the full picture," he then asked for the closed session.

Reports

(Continued from page 1)

"Publishing such allegations at this particular moment without reference to the facts prompts one to conclude that the allegations are designed to mislead public opinion about Jordan's stand," the Jordanian official said in Amman.

He said that this hostile campaign on Jordan can best be countered by the publication of the facts related to these allegations.

Saddam

(Continued from page 1)

It was the first time the Iraqi president had made broadcast comments since an interview by Peter Arnett of the U.S.-based Cable News Network (CNN) two weeks ago.

INA said President Saddam reaffirmed that the Iraqis "each passing hour and day become more firm in what they believe, and they shine out more in front of the whole world."

"Iraq is not ready to relinquish the role given to it by God," the president said.

"All the good people will be victorious as Iraq, and victory will restore to the Iraqis all the requirements for a free and honourable living that they will merit as a reward for their patience and steadfastness," the news agency said.

The speech ran about 20 minutes. President Saddam said Mr. Bush had lost his credibility when he "lost the power of conviction and the God-given power of dialogue."

He said "all of America's financial, military and economic power is not sufficient to fight the fortress of faith in Iraq."

President Saddam appealed to others to join forces with Iraq.

By Saeda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — In response to a question "why Islam after all?" one Islamic writer said: "It is the religion under the wing of which people in our kind of societies can be both moral and creative. Hence it becomes imperative that we should find Islamic solutions to our social and political problems. For we have already seen what is happening to those who believed the West when it urged them to 'follow us and your problems will be solved.' They have now come to discover that the West was not sincere in its claim and that beheading West-ern call proved, in many ways, to be disastrous."

Abiding by the Koranic verse, "among these Muslims must be a party, or association or group emanate which carries the Islamic call (da'wa) to all peoples asking them to apply Islamic principles and avoiding Islamic taboos; this group will be victorious." Each Islamic movement considers its establishment as essential as well as a duty to spread the Islamic principles to all people.

Because of different interpretations, however, each movement claims to be the best representatives of Islamic tenets. While these movements' popularity and means to achieve their aims vary, their funding also diverse, they all agree upon the necessity of setting up an Islamic state, the implementation of Sharia, and the liberation of Palestine and other Arab and Muslim occupied territories.

Jihad, the ultimate of Islamic beliefs, is one of the most solid bases that Islamic movements rely on in their resurgence in the Muslim World. The most important amongst their objectives were deeply influenced by the Palestine issue and the aim of creating an Islamic state that would implement Sharia in all aspects of a Muslims life.

The popularity of Islamic movements has surged in recent years. Their followers, identified primarily in women wearing hijab and men wearing beards, are on the increase. Their movements' popularity is attributed to many factors. In addition to the failure of the secular state to address Muslims' modern day problems, the success of Iran's Islamic revolution in toppling the pro-West regime of Shah Reza Pahlavi, of the Afghan Mujahideen in resisting Soviet occupation, of the Hamas movement in resisting Israeli occupation, and successful publicity campaigns, made these movements all the more powerful. But perhaps the most important factor of all is that Islam as a faith is ingrained in every Muslim's psyche.

Muslim Brotherhood

One of the earliest movements in modern Arab and Muslim history, the Muslim Brotherhood Movement, was founded in Ismailia in Egypt in 1928, by Hassan Al Banna.

The Brotherhood's emergence came as a result of the "political and ideological vacuum Islamic countries suffered from" following the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, the last Islamic state, in 1924, and the Arab World's fall under Western occupation. Al Banna, an Islamic reformer, received one day six visitors who pledged loyalty to him and asked him to save their

country from disintegration and disunity. The six, including two brothers, and Banna, having developed strong relations based on the principles of Islam, settled at the end of their meeting to call themselves "The Muslim Brotherhood."

The Muslim Brotherhood put all its efforts into spreading the Islamic call among the Egyptian people. In 1939, it had gained popularity in all parts of the country as a direct result of increased publicity. A number of magazines and newspapers it issued contributed to highlighting the group's main objectives and succeeded in formulating an Islamic public opinion.

Throughout their history in Egypt and later in other Arab and Islamic countries, the movement's members suffered persecution and imprisonment. Some were sentenced to death. According to the movement, the revolutionary government of Jamal Abdul Nasser arrested and banished thousands of its members accusing them of attempting to topple Nasser and kill him. In 1954, Egyptian military courts convicted six of its members and sentenced them to death. All six were executed.

The movement's influence was not restricted to Egypt, it spread to most Arab countries after 1945 among which were Syria, Palestine, Sudan as well as Jordan. Abdul Latif Abu Qarab headed the movement in Jordan which was founded on Nov. 19, 1953. Mohammad Abdul Rahman Khalifa was elected as its leader. At an Islamic conference that was held in Jerusalem the same year, it was decided to establish a central office for the movement. The main mission of this Jerusalem-based bureau was to explain the Palestinian cause to all peoples and leaders of the Islamic World.

The Brotherhood's main objective is to implement Islamic law (Sharia) in all aspects of life. Its members consider armed struggle (Jihad) as the only means to realize their objectives. However, because of a crackdown on the movement and the execution of several of its members in Egypt, the movement changed strategy and shifted from armed struggle to religious and political reform.

According to the movement's leaders, it concentrates on creating, as a first step, a Muslim generation that fully comprehends and adheres to Islamic principles. This is achieved, according to the movement, by first reforming the individual, then the family and consequently the Muslim people at large. This would eventually lead to the establishment of an Islamic government that would take on the responsibility of applying Sharia.

While some analysts say that the Muslim Brotherhood received donations and financial aid from some governments such as Saudi Arabia or even the U.S., Brotherhood leaders maintain they receive no financial aid from any government. The movement's expenses, they say, are covered by donations from members, followers and by the income it generates by investing in a number of income-generating, profit-making projects. The movement's leaders consider this as a source of pride and dignity. They say the movement has the highest number of adherents and followers of all Islamic movements in Jordan.

Why Islam after all?

Islamic Liberation Party (Al Tahrir)

The Islamic Liberation Party was founded in Jerusalem in 1952 by Sheikh Taqi Eddin al Nabahani, a judge and politician. At that time the party formally presented itself to the Ministry of Interior asking for permission to register as a political party. The demand was rejected on the basis that the

implemented throughout the Muslim World and must be spread consequently to all other parts of the world.

Unlike the Muslim Brotherhood Movement, the Liberation Party was completely banned and its activities were restricted. It therefore relied on secret pamphlets to convey its message to the public.

mic call) by way of preaching or applying Islam gradually or even taking it as a belief are not committed to Islamic orders. And our party preaches to them and tries to convince them to correct their methods."

The party's main objective is the establishment of Islamic law in the Muslim nation. This should be carried out, according to the

by taking power and the implementation of Islam comprehensively and generally and to pass its message to the world.

To Tahrir Palestine was not viewed as an ordinary Islamic country; it was a sacred entity so most of the party's efforts were directed towards its liberation and the establishment of an Islamic state.

The party claims that several of its members were arrested and are still in prison despite the release of many political prisoners since November 1989, when the country held its first elections and the commencement of the democratic process in Jordan.

Islamic Jihad Movement — Beit al Maqdes

The Islamic Jihad Movement was created for the sole objective of liberating occupied Palestine. It was established in 1980 by Sheikh Assad Bayouh al Tamimi who had "put all his efforts into establishing a combat movement that would lead Muslims to liberate the sacred places by founding the Islamic Jihad Movement in 1980."

Sheikh Tamimi claims responsibility for starting the Palestinian uprising (intifada) in 1987. Some Islamic Jihad's youths, according to the group, escaped from Israeli prisons in the occupied Gaza Strip and were engaged in al Shuja'ieh battle where several Israeli officials and soldiers were killed. The killing of four members of the movement had led to a general strike which led to the eruption of the intifada.

earlier and best known Sufi movements in Jordan otherwise known as the Chadilieh Movement. Established in 1964 by Sheikh Hazem Abu Ghazaleh, it considers itself an extension of the Muslim Brotherhood Movement.

The movement's main objective is to prepare the mureed (someone who seeks knowledge of God through Sufi methods), for Jihad. The movement has been a school for many Muslim leaders in Jordan including two Islamic deputies, Leith Shbeilat and Ya'qoub Qerrash.

The movement relies basically on private lessons and teachings that it holds in mosques and in homes. They do not carry out any particular operations because they concentrate on educating the Muslim individual and turning him or her into a dedicated Muslim and a mujahid (Islamic fighter). This will lead, according to one member of the movement, to the preparation of the individual to face Jihad with an open mind and spirit and to the triumph of the nation of Islam.

Because the movement does not have an extensive public relations and recruitment programme, its members are only limited to the founders and several others who take lessons and participate in their sessions.

New Islamic Movement

Ya'qoub Qerrash and Leith Shbeilat — Islamist deputies at the Lower House of Parliament and both disciples of Dar al Koran aim to establish a new

Because of different interpretations, however, each movement claims to be the best representatives of Islamic tenets. While these movements' popularity and means to achieve their aims vary, their funding also diverse, they all agree upon the necessity of setting up an Islamic state, the implementation of Sharia, and the liberation of Palestine and other Arab and Muslim occupied territories.

In 1989, the movement added "Beit al Maqdes" to its name in order to be able to differentiate between itself and other movements of the same name. It has chosen "Beit al Maqdes" on the basis that Jerusalem is to be the Islamic capital after liberation.

The movement's ideology is based on the adoption of the Islamic way of thinking which stems from the Holy Koran and the traditions of the Prophet Mohammad. According to Sheikh Tamimi, the movement does not rely on materialistic powers to achieve victory, but it depends on God's support.

"Muslims have never won in their history by their large number or advanced equipment, they won through their deep religious belief," he says.

Accordingly, Sheikh Tamimi and his three sons, who are the leaders of the movement, direct their operations through contacts in countries surrounding Israel, as well as in Palestine. Tamimi claims to have become the symbol of Jihad and a "wanted dangerous man" by the occupation forces.

The movement bases its relations with other countries, organizations and movements on the principles of Islam. The main objective of this movement is the "establishment of God's law on earth and the liberation of the holy land from the Jews."

Dar al Koran
Dar al Koran is one of the

Jihad — the road to utopia

By Saeda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

WHILE the Gulf war has brought about many economic losses to the people of Jordan it has, nevertheless, strengthened Islamic movements in the country and contributed to the unification of different ideologies under the banner of Jihad.

Jihad (holy war), which for long inspired Muslims as well as Arabs in their conflicts with outside invaders has now taken a stronger bold thanks to the support it received from a powerful Arab leader, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, and backing of Islamic movements.

"No matter how blasphemous a Muslim is, he will defend Islam in face of attackers," declares an Islamist leader who preferred anonymity. "There will always lurk in him a spark of faith and an internal belief which neither the West nor an outsider's will will be able to eradicate."

Basically an Islamic notion, Jihad has a deeply spiritual significance that is linked to the history, tradition and culture of the Arab people. In its implication to martyrdom, the word brings a "glorious" and "prestigious" feeling to the martyr's family and an outstanding zeal to those who are willing to sacrifice their souls for the sake of God.

The main difference between the West and us is that we beat towards Jihad willingly with an open spirit and a martyrdom notion," points out Hassan Al Tal, chief editor of Al Liwa newspaper, "contrary to the West which not only prefers not to go to war, but also not to die," he said emphasising that Jihad is the wish and objective of every Muslim.

People with strong Islamic conviction believe that the solution to their present problems lies in liberating occupied Arab territories by way of Jihad, and thus by returning to Islam. Their loss of faith in the existing regimes and what they consider as the

phase of decadence from which the Muslim umma (nation) is suffering have also contributed to the reinforcement of Jihad's significance.

An Algerian Islamist writer maintains that the rising tendency towards the adoption of Islam is attributed to the Muslim nation's loss of confidence in the political, economic and social solutions "imported" from "capitalist and socialist" countries. He also points to the tendency among Muslim youth to search for solutions for their spiritual problems. "Islam can restore to them their lost identity, dignity and self assurance, and provide solutions for their present problems; unimported solutions that have their roots in the realities of their own situation."

Thus, "Islam is the solution" and "Jihad is the mean" comes as the saviour flashing in the horizon for many in their efforts to overcome their present hardships: be they economic, political or spiritual. On the political level, this is evidently manifested in the Islamic movements' persistent efforts to carry banners calling the liberation of the occupied territories, especially Palestine, in their call for Jihad.

Several calls were launched by Islamic leaders following the eruption of the Gulf crisis and President Saddam Hussein's call for Jihad.

The main resolutions adopted by a meeting in Libya of Islamic leaders is a call for a unified stand against foreign troops in the Gulf. Iraq's withdrawal was conditioned with a simultaneous withdrawal of all troops in the Gulf and their replacement with Islamic and Arab troops. Proposals included ones for demonstrations during the month of Islamic pilgrimage this year as a reaction to this violent aggression on the holy shrines. Another call for Jihad was issued by Sheikh Assad Bayouh al Tamimi, the leader of the Islamic Jihad

Movement (Beit al Maqdes) with demands on the Jordanian government to arm the people.

"Liberating occupied territories are an essential part in our programme," says Abdul Rahman Khalifa, leader of Muslim Brotherhood Movement, "according to Islam, if an enemy trespassed a minor part of Islamic territory Jihad becomes an obligation on every Muslim (men, women)."

With the same connotation and citing the same saying of Prophet Mohammad, the Islamic Liberation Party insists on the importance of Jihad. "Al Tahrir Party's position towards Israeli occupation of Palestine and towards the new crusade invasion of the Arabian Peninsula is embodied in Islamic teachings: If infidels or an enemy occupies a span of Islamic land then Jihad will be a must for Muslims," points out Ata Abu Ristbeh.

In a previous interview with Agency France Press, Leith Shbeilat, an Islamist deputy, confirmed that Islamic deputies support Iraq almost unanimously. He also demanded the government to arm every city and every village.

According to Islamic leaders, the call for Jihad at present has helped erase differences among Islamic movements. They are all now aiming at one particular objective that would help establishing the "Islamic state," many said.

"Differences in opinion must not generate dispute, Khalifa says. "Islamic movements are already united in their objective and efforts to rescue the nation."

"There are many differences among Islamic movements," Ayda Abdullah, a representative of a Sufist movement — Dar al Quran. "But for us, we stand behind Saddam, because standing with an Arab leader is better than standing with the Americans."

movement, by following the Prophet's example. That is, the party's method of applying Islam passes through three stages.

The first one is the informative phase, which means finding people who believe in and adhere to the party's principles. The second phase is that of interaction with the nation to adopt the party's principles as the nation's cause. The final phase is characterised

party's programme did not recognise the Jordanian constitution.

The party's main political aim is to establish the rule of the caliph (successor in the Prophet Mohammad) all over the Muslim World following the example of the first four caliphs (al Rashideen, i.e. the wise men). According to a new member of the party, the implementation of Islam in one country alone is not sufficient; Islam, he says, must be

Al Tahrir's methods of the implementing its objectives differ from those of other Islamic movements. "Al Tahrir Party is a political party that believes in Islam as a doctrine and ideology," said Ata Abu Al Ristbeh, the party's leader in an interview conducted before he was arrested two weeks ago following a press conference at Amra Hotel.

"Other Islamic movements' methods in carrying da'wa (Islamic

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JORDAN MARKET PLACE

U.S. energy official sees slight decline in oil prices after war

BOCA RATON, Florida (R) — Oil prices may slip slightly once the Gulf war ends but a steep drop seems unlikely, the number one man at the U.S. Energy department said at the weekend.

"The price of oil may drop a little bit on euphoria that the war is over," Deputy Energy Secretary Henson Moore said. He told Reuters in an interview that oil prices could drop to about \$18 a barrel from \$21.

But Moore, in Florida for a national Association of Manufacturers meeting which ended Sunday, added: "Prices won't go down very long."

Some industry analysts have forecast a postwar oil surplus could drive prices down below \$15 after the threat of an Iraqi attack on Saudi Arabia's oil fields has been removed.

Moore said much would depend on how quickly Kuwait and

Iraq could resume production. But, while a sharp price drop could not be ruled out, he said any decline was likely to prove temporary.

Oil demand would pick up as industrial nations came out of recession. At the same time, producers which had stepped up output after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait last August would cut back, if only to carry out needed maintenance on refineries.

To help keep the oil market calm while the war is on, the Energy Department has set up a war operations room in Washington to gather information and intelligence on Saudi oil supplies.

That information is made available to the market to prevent rumours from whipsawing prices one way and the other, he said.

The room is manned around the clock, is off limits to most

department personnel and communicates every hour on the hour with the department's own staff in Saudi Arabia.

"We have information before the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency)," Moore said.

The department anticipated that Iraq might use a huge oil spill to disrupt U.S. military operations and had explored other actions it might take to damage refineries and oil wells, he said. He declined to elaborate.

In the long term, he saw prices rising slowly and steadily, perhaps by an average five per cent a year after inflation.

To help cope with future oil shocks, the U.S. administration plans to put forward a national energy strategy before the end of the month, seeking to boost energy supplies and lower demand.

"The entire proposal will have

a substantial impact on reducing demand," Moore said, seeking to reassure environmentalists who fear the plan would give short shrift to energy conservation, efficiency and alternative fuels.

He said the Bush administration would not propose new energy taxes nor would it endorse at this point an increase in fuel efficiency standards for cars.

The plan was bound to be opposed by some environmental groups and could run into opposition in Congress but he said the strategy could act as a blueprint for future action.

Nuclear fusion plants would not be viable until 2025. Electric vehicles might not have much of an impact on energy demands until 1997.

"This is a long-term project, out to the year 2030," Moore added.

Ozal urges business to gear up for 'incredible economic activity'

ISTANBUL (R) — Turkish President Turgut Ozal has predicted the Gulf war will last for six more weeks at most and urged businessmen to prepare for a bright post-war economy.

"Extremely positive business (prospects) are on the way for Turkey in the Gulf crisis ... as soon as the crisis is over, an incredible economic activity will start," Ozal told a business meeting at the Aegean city of Izmir.

"Don't change your plans. If you have modernisation work, go ahead. My estimate is the war will last only for another month and a half at most," the Anatolian News Agency quoted him as saying.

Ozal, who has let U.S. planes raid Iraq from a southern base in Turkey, has skillfully capitalised on his country's revived strategic

importance to the West.

"Turkey has won respect (in the Gulf crisis)," said Ozal. "We might not have received a cent from anybody. Nobody was forced to do so. But we received grants. We received credits."

Turkey has so far received \$2 billion in Western aid to offset economic damage caused by the Gulf crisis, government officials said.

Saudi Arabia has agreed to supply free oil worth \$1.1 billion. The World Bank has nearly tripled its annual lending to \$900 million and Japan extended more than \$600 million in low-interest loans.

"Turkey will enter a period of fast economic growth in the next few months," said Ozal, warning businessmen not to expect

favours from the government in the form of fiscal incentives.

The conservative daily Tercuman reported Saturday that state ministers Gunes Taner and Isin Celebi and Finance Minister Adnan Kahveci were working on a new economic package aimed at fast growth.

Incentives for tourism and exports, sectors worst hit by the Gulf war, as well as further devaluation in the foreign exchange regime would be included in the package, Tercuman said.

Bankers say a wait-and-see mood has slowed down business but they believe the economy can cope with the crisis. Industrial expansion and fast recovery from drought last year produced a gross national product (GNP) growth of over nine per cent, compared to 1989's 1.7 per cent.

Financial markets have regained confidence following a short-lived panic on the eve of the Gulf war 24 days ago.

The bulk of about five trillion lira (\$1.6 billion) withdrawn from banks in panic before the start of the war have been returned, bankers said.

A fast recovery in business confidence was also reflected at Istanbul's emerging stock market, where share prices went up 7.6 per cent last week.

Ordinary Turks, whose real income has more than halved in a decade, have little enthusiasm for Ozal's positive attitude.

A recent round of price hikes, ranging from electricity to paper, is expected to push inflation up further from its annual level of 62 per cent.

Gulf war damages G.M. sales

ATLANTA (R) — General Motors (G.M.) Corporation's chairman said Saturday the Gulf war has stalled the world's car industry, further eroding consumer confidence in the recessionary U.S. market and hurting European sales.

Robert Stempel, interviewed after a speech to U.S. auto dealers, told Reuters the war had hurt Middle East car sales and he hoped U.S. firms in the region would not be hurt by lingering anti-Americanism.

"The war has had a negative effect on consumer confidence. As a result, with the precipitous fall-off and the confidence not being there, people are staying away from our (new car and truck) showrooms," he said.

G.M. rocked world financial markets last Monday by cutting

its cash dividend by almost 50 per cent and setting plans to cut the jobs of 15,000 of its 100,000 North American white-collar workers through 1993.

The world's biggest industrial corporation, which in 1989 posted global profits of \$4.2 billion on revenues of almost \$127 billion, is scheduled to announce 1990 full-year results next Thursday.

Securities analysts predict that G.M., which has taken charges against income to cut back operations, will record a full-year 1990 loss and a record operation loss for its fourth quarter.

G.M. President Lloyd Reuss has said the company's important North American car business probably lost money last year.

Stempel said in the interview: "Obviously we'd like the war to be settled ... clearly when that

gets behind us we'll go to work on the economy. When we get that settled down, then we're ready to go with our new products and get some sales."

He said G.M. slashed North American 1991 production rates for new cars and trucks from late 1990 levels due to dwindling orders from U.S. dealers.

The G.M. chief said European business turned down after the start of the Gulf war on Jan. 17.

"One strong country is still Germany, but (Britain), Spain, Italy, France are weakening. So what has been a boom market is just a little slower as people sort of regroup and think about this armed conflict," he said.

Stempel said that due to the Gulf war, "my Midwest market is zero right now. There's a lot of pent-up demand in the Midwest, but a lot's got to happen before

our dealers can go back."

G.M. lost roughly a quarter of its Middle East market when Iraq invaded Kuwait in August, the day after Stempel became chairman. The Gulf crisis also froze the company's joint venture project to make vehicles in Iraq.

But Stempel said: "We've got strong business ties to the Middle East and hopefully we can preserve those. I just hope that the political damage isn't so great that (U.S. companies are) persona non grata."

G.M., which exports mainly large passenger and luxury cars and sport utility vehicles to Saudi Arabia and other Middle East states, would likely sell its cars in the region through its German Adam Opel A.G. subsidiary if politics made direct G.M. sales not feasible, he said.

Gulf war, IRA attack trigger fear of Irish tourism loss

DUBLIN (R) — The Gulf war and the IRA mortar attack on British Prime Minister John Major could devastate tourism in Ireland this year, tourism officials fear.

Hotels warn of job losses, the Irish Tourist Board has cancelled a U.S. advertising promotion campaign, car hire reservations are down and six American bands have decided to opt out of Ireland's national day parade in Dublin next month.

Irish Tourist Board officials said they now fear that last week's Irish Republican Army (IRA) mortar bomb attack on Major's London residence could have a knock-on effect on tourism.

Almost half of the 440,000 U.S. visitors to Ireland last year came via other European cities, mainly London.

"Officials say they are concerned that the attack, combined with Britain's frontline involvement in the Gulf war, could pose problems for Ireland."

U.S. tourist bookings for Ireland in January were down 17 per cent on the same month last year, Irish Tourist Board chief, Martin Dully, said his worst case scenario — a drawn-out Gulf conflict — would be a 40 per cent downturn this year.

One leading hotel executive, Eamonn McKee, told the Irish Times: "Even if the Gulf war ended in a week's time, the season is pretty well shot at this stage."

Corporate business is also suffering in Ireland — as it is across Europe — with executives reluctant to travel and video conferencing enjoying a boom.

The Irish Tourist Board said last week that it postponed a \$900,000 advertising campaign in the U.S. media.

Some of that money has been switched to Europe. Ireland attracted 740,000 tourists from Europe last year and officials hope the continent can make up for some of the U.S. shortfall.

The Gulf war apart, the industry is also worried that an economic recession in the major U.S. and British markets could keep many would-be holidaymakers at home this year.

Bonn considers banning anti-Israeli terms in Arab contracts

BONN (R) — The German government is investigating ways to stop German firms signing anti-Israeli clauses in contracts with Arab companies, the foreign ministry said Saturday.

Spokesman Hanns Schumacher said it was reviewing laws in the United States, France and the Netherlands prohibiting companies there from signing Arab contracts which included a pledge to boycott Israel.

He denied that the government's interest was provoked by criticism from German Jewish leaders and Israeli Ambassador Benjamin Navon, who said Friday the anti-Israeli clauses amounted to "an economic war against my country."

"The issue has been under consideration for some time. The boycott clauses are not new, they've been known of for a long time," Schumacher said.

"The federal government rejects the trade boycott against Israel. We are considering the experience other countries have had with prohibiting boycott clauses."

Several German firms said the clauses were a routine matter which did not prevent them trading with Israel.

"It was an open secret," the firms said.

but insisted on the clauses as a matter of principle," said Hans Peter Schreiner, spokesman for Thyssen A.G. subsidiary Thyssen Hand-

elsmuis A.G.

U.S. credit crunch will stay for a while

BOCA RATON, Florida (R) — The United States still has a way to go before ending the credit crunch that has hurt the economy, Federal Reserve (Fed) Chairman Alan Greenspan said Saturday.

The head of the U.S. central bank said he saw no "convincing evidence" yet that bank lending was starting to pick up and that the credit crunch was ending.

"We still have a way to go," he told a twice-yearly meeting of the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) here.

But Greenspan voiced confidence that the Fed and other banking regulators would eventually solve the problem.

The credit crunch has aggravated America's economic downturn because banks have grown increasingly stingy in making the loans that U.S. business need to grow.

A NAM survey found that nearly two-thirds of the 150 so companies here for the association's meeting believe that the growth of manufacturing could be cramped by the credit crunch.

"The real problem businesses have is getting money," said Walter Casey, head of a water conditioning company that bears his name. "The banks have really pulled back on their loans."

"It's a very substantial problem," Greenspan agreed.

The problem is particularly acute in New England where banks that have found many of their past loans going sour have refused to extend new credit, even to the most creditworthy of borrowers.

In singling out the credit crunch for attack, Greenspan made clear that he was not advocating a return to the lax lending standards of the mid-1980's.

"We are not going to solve it (the credit crunch) by getting banks to open up the (lending) spigot," Greenspan said. "What we need is a restoration of sound lending and sensible supervision."

The Fed has tried to tackle the problem by lowering interest rates and by reducing the level of reserves banks must set aside to cover their deposits.

It is also now working with the Treasury Department and other bank regulatory agencies to change accounting rules that may be discouraging banks from lending more, Greenspan said.

"We have every reason to believe that the lowering of interest rates, the changes in reserve requirements and the removal of inappropriate, inhibiting accounting procedures should bring the credit crunch to an end," he said.

Gulf crisis cost top Chinese firms \$1b

BEIJING (AP) — China's top four overseas construction companies have lost more than \$1 billion in the Gulf crisis but are eager to return to the region after the war, an official report said Sunday.

Before the outbreak of war, China had 10,000 citizens, mostly labourers, in Kuwait and Iraq, and \$2.7 billion in labour service contracts in the region.

The Gulf was a major market for the four construction companies. The war forced them to put negotiations and signing of new contracts on hold, the China Daily's business weekly reported.

China Metallurgical Construction Corp. planned to negotiate for several projects in Iran and Jordan, and China International Water and Electricity Corp. was on the verge of signing contracts for projects in Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, the paper said.

But work on some ongoing projects in the United Arab Emirates and Yemen was continuing, the report said.

"If we did nothing in the Gulf region now, we would lose the chance to enter the market after the war," said Zhai Guangjiang, an official for the China State Construction Engineering Corp.

The four companies are maintaining contacts with Saudi Arabia firms. China and Saudi Arabia established diplomatic relations last year, and the firms were just beginning to discuss sending Chinese labourers to the kingdom.

The future of projects in Iraq remains in doubt, though no firm has ruled out doing business there in the future, the report said.

The four companies have lost \$1 billion since the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait last August. Their losses include non-payment by Kuwait and Iraq for completed projects, deposits lost in local banks, equipment left in the Middle East and the cost of evacuating workers, the report said.

China said before the outbreak of war last month that it had lost \$2 billion in trade, transport and civil aviation. The figure did not include debts owed by Iraq for trade and labour.

Political crisis threatens IMF-Yugoslavia accord

BELGRADE (R) — Ethnic and political turmoil threaten Yugoslavia's chances of a new \$1 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), National Bank Vice-Governor Zarko Trbojevic was quoted as saying.

He told Yugoslav newspapers the loan would depend on the outcome of talks between federal leaders and Yugoslavia's six constituent republics.

A further \$2.5 billion of loans sought by Yugoslavia from the World Bank and other lenders hinged on talks with an IMF delegation in Belgrade.

The country is torn by ethnic and political conflicts and talks between the republics and federal

leaders have shown little sign of solving disputes that are blocking reforms.

The republics of Slovenia and Croatia want more independence and oppose the strengthening of federal controls of the economy.

"The IMF supports a unified Yugoslavia and is willing to give financial support to such a state," Trbojevic told the Yugoslav parliament last week.

"Whether a new agreement will be signed depends above all on our internal agreement about the future of the country and a guarantee by the federal government that it has the instruments to control macro-economic policy," he noted.

Figures show Polish private sector rising

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — Production in the state-dominated industrial sector plummeted 25 per cent while the private sector nearly doubled its share of the output during the first year of Poland's dramatic economic reforms, government officials have reported.

Unemployment surged faster than anticipated, with more than 1.1 million people, or 6.1 per cent of the work force, jobless, according to the Central Planning Office survey carried by the official PAP news agency.

The "shock" economic transformation, the furthest reaching in the former East Bloc, was launched on Jan. 1, 1990. The plan to transform the socialist, centralised economy into a market-driven capitalist system includes a cutoff of state subsidies to industries, decontrol of prices, wide-scale privatisation and an opening to foreign investment.

The post-communist government has managed to keep the value of the Polish zloty stable for a year, making it convertible within Poland at a fixed rate

backed by a reserve of Western currency.

Foreign trade, especially food exports, increased more than expected, rising 15 per cent over 1989, the government said. Imports dropped by 16 per cent, creating a surplus.

The inflation rate, which reached an all-time high of more than 1,100 per cent annually when calculated last February, has been reined in. The 1990 inflation rate was about 250 per cent, with the increase in December about five per cent.

Real incomes sank by 22.1 per cent during 1990, and real wages by 29.1 per cent, according to the government report.

However, some economists, including government adviser Jeffrey Sachs of Harvard University, suggest the drop in real incomes is more in the 10 per cent range. They say the official statistics do not account for the value of the vastly improved supplies of consumer goods and the new items and services that become available daily.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Sunday, February 10, 1991
Central Bank official rates

	Buy	Sell		Buy	Sell
U.S. dollar	662.0	666.0	Japanese yen (for 100)	\$18.4	\$21.5
Pound Sterling	1317.0	1324.9	Dutch guilder	403.7	406.1
Deutschemark	454.6	457.3	Swedish crown	121.0	121.7
Swiss franc	532.2	535.4	Italian lire (for 100)	60.4	60.8
French franc	133.5	134.3	Belgian franc (for 10)	220.8	222.1

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Albania plans radical economic reform

TIRANA (R) — Communist Albania is planning major economic changes after 46 years of Stalinist central planning and isolation from the outside world.

"We will apply radical reforms," said state economist Leon Chuchi in an interview. "We will give up central planning as a driving force and introduce the mechanism of a market economy."

Under Enver Hoxha, who established communist rule in 1944, such talk could have meant execution, and after his death in 1985 it could have meant a long spell in prison.

But since last month President Ramiz Alia has moved towards the economic and political reforms that have swept other eastern European countries. He has set the first free election for March 31.

In recent weeks the tiny Balkan state on the Adriatic Sea, with 3.3 million inhabitants and an annual gross domestic product of just \$4 billion — has opened up in a way unthinkable a year ago.

The statue of Stalin in the centre of the capital, Tirana, has been taken down and businessmen from Italy, France, Germany and Switzerland can be heard at

the main hotel discussing a variety of projects.

The message on the lips of every communist official now seems to be "the need to enter Europe," and talk is of joint ventures with foreign firms in light industry and developing tourism.

"We'll be making big investments in infrastructure," Chuchi said. "For production as well as services. Areas such as transport, railways, highways, refrigerated food warehouses, communications, public services and tourism."

Did that mean one of Europe's most tightly-sealed borders would be opening up soon? "Yes, of course," he said.

Policies adopted after the communists took power in 1944 closed Albania to contact with the outside world and prevented progress while Albania's leaders tried to build a workers' utopia.

Viewed from Western Europe, Albania is starting from scratch. Communications are primitive — the businessmen at the hotel competed for a single telephone. Transport is difficult with no private cars or taxis. About 20,000 tourists visited the country in 1990 — 8.5 million people went to

neighbouring Greece.

Industry throughout the country is in an advanced state of decay, and more than 100,000 people pull ploughs than tractors. The main form of transport is by foot.

"One of our greatest mistakes was concentrating our efforts in heavy industries," said Gramoz Pashko, a leader of the new opposition Democratic Party. "This took most of the capital investment and stifled development of light industries."

About 57 per cent of Albania's export earnings come from four areas: Chromium, nickel, copper products and energy — mostly hydro-electricity supplied to other Balkan states.

Heavy industry comprises 70 per cent of all industrial production and light industry, including items such as bread, cigarettes and textiles, 30 per cent.

Pashko, a professor of economics and until last December a member of the Communist Party, said that light industry must be developed to absorb a ballooning workforce caused by population growth of about two per cent a year in the 1960s and 1970s.

Unemployment in the 1.4 million-strong workforce is between five and 10 per cent, Pashko said. Chuchi put the number of jobs at 30,000 or about two per cent.

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Lithuanians defy Kremlin, vote overwhelmingly to leave S. Union

VILNIUS, U.S.S.R. (AP) — Lithuanians defied Mikhail Gorbachev's appeals and voted overwhelmingly to leave the Soviet Union.

Their president said Sunday he hoped the result of the non-binding vote would lead other republics to take the same step.

Lithuanian election officials said early Sunday that according to preliminary results, 90.5 per cent of voters cast ballots in favour of independence and 6.5 per cent against. The rest of the ballots were invalid, said Lena Stasiunaityte, a Lithuanian parliament spokeswoman.

After the announcement, Lithuanian President Vytautas Landsbergis told reporters in a packed conference hall at the fortified parliament building that the result fortified the Lithuanian secession drive.

"I think it is a victory against lying and intimidation. The Lithuanian people reject lies and they are not afraid," he said.

The Soviet president last week declared the vote "legally invalid" and told Lithuanians they must take part in a nationwide, Kremlin-ordered referendum on March 17 on preserving the union. Lithuanian leaders have refused, saying Soviet law was not binding on their territory.

Landsbergis said the result should encourage the neighbouring Baltic states of Latvia and Estonia to proceed with plans for similar polls on their territory.

Roughly 2.7 million of the republic's 3.7 million people were eligible to vote, according to parliament officials. The turnout was 34 per cent, Ms. Stasiunaityte said.

The count was based on results phoned in by the 55 voting districts, she said.

At 11 p.m. (2100 GMT), before any vote projections were released, Landsbergis went on live television to congratulate citizens.

"The great majority of people in Lithuania no longer have any fear, and once again express their determination to the world," he said. "Today we did good work, and we took one more step along the road to independence."

The vote was expected to give Lithuania some moral ammunition in a secessionist struggle that is being watched closely within the Soviet Union and around the world.

About 17 per cent of Lithuania's population is ethnic Russian or Polish, and those minority groups are the biggest source of opposition to secession.

The Soviet military and KGB secret police increased their presence in Lithuania on the eve of the vote, which was held four weeks after soldiers stormed Lithuania's broadcasting centre, killing 13 civilians. A total of 21 people have died in the recent crackdown in Lithuania and the neighbouring Baltic Republic of Latvia.

An estimated 1,400 armed KGB cadets in full battle gear arrived Friday night at bases near Vilnius and Lithuania's second largest city, Kaunas, Lithuanian parliament spokesman Audrius Azubalis said.

Polls opened at 7 a.m. (0500 GMT) Saturday and closed at 8 p.m. (1800 GMT). Fearing interference in the vote-counting, election officials said no ballots would be transported to Vilnius on the night of the vote. Instead, the votes were to be counted locally and results called in to Vilnius.

Over 40 Albanians arrested in clashes

VIENNA (R) — Over 40 Albanians were arrested after clashes in the country's biggest port Saturday in what police fired in the air and there may have been fatalities, opposition sources said.

Gene Polo, spokesman for the fledgling Democratic Party, said Albanian television reported 44 arrests and 33 police injured in the clashes, which followed rumours that Albanians would be allowed to board an Italian-bound ferry without visas.

The television gave no figure for civilian casualties in the port of Durres, saying only that there had been some. Polo, reached by telephone, said he had heard reports of bodies being taken away.

He said the television had shown one person lying on the ground who appeared to be dead. "From the way the body was lying, I can't believe the person was alive," he said.

Polo said several thousands people arrived in Durres Friday night in response to rumours circulating that the ferry that plies between Trieste and Bari in Italy and Durres three times a month would take anyone who wanted to go.

The would-be emigrants included people from other towns, including a large contingent from Tirana, the capital, he said.

Japan shuts down reactor after generator is damaged

TOKYO (R) — Japan shut down a nuclear reactor Saturday after a generator was damaged by a fire, forcing the government and power company officials to shut down the reactor.

The accident caused the emergency core cooling system (ECCS) to pour a huge amount of water into the reactor's core to prevent fuel rods from melting down, they said.

The 500,000-kilowatt pressurized water reactor at Fukushima, 350 kilometres west of Tokyo, is owned and operated by Kansai Electric Power Company.

It was the first time an emergency device has shut down a troubled nuclear reactor in Japan, which has 38 nuclear power plants.

Small pipes in the steam generator had developed cracks or holes, allowing radioactive coolant water to flow from the main cooling system to the substation that powers steam turbines.

Government and power company officials played down the accident, saying the emergency system performed successfully.

Anti-nuclear activists expressed grave concern at the effects of possible radioactive leaks on the environment.

"If the ECCS failed to operate, the accident could have caused a meltdown of the core, the magnitude of which would equal the accident at Three Mile Island," the Kyoto News Agency quoted nuclear expert Nisaburo Takagi as saying.

"There is little to worry about because the radiation discharged to the atmosphere has been kept to an absolute minimum by a special filter," a power company spokesman said.

India begins census

NEW DELHI (R) — Some 1.5 million census takers fanned out over India this weekend, visiting shacks and mansions to find out just how big the population explosion is in the world's second most heavily populated nation.

The army of enumerators will seek out every home in a country the size of Western Europe over the next three weeks, with a special brief to try to coax the truth from Indians about how many women and children work.

"I think this could very well be the greatest administrative exercise in the world," said A.R. Nanda, India's registrar general and census commissioner.

How many people are in India today?

"My hunch is it will be 860 to 865 million," he said in an interview.

The enumerators' task of finding out the age, geographic origin, schooling and work of every Indian for the 11-yearly census is not easy.

"This time they have the sensitive job of questioning women intensively, trying to uncover the real facts about how many people in each family earn money."

Social workers say 55 million children under the age of 14 work in India, including 10 million bonded into servitude.

They also say India has a vast army of unpaid or poorly paid women workers, whose labour outside the home goes unrecorded for fear of social stigma or simply because it is not valued.

"Women must come out and explain what work they do, even if it's unpaid work or the family farm," Nanda said.

With barely four Indians in 10 able to read and write, the enumerators have no choice but to visit every house, tent, or collection of mud and sticks which has a roof and people sleeping inside, Nanda said.

The questions will be put in India's 103 different written languages and several hundred dialects.

"The literacy rate is not high enough to permit a mailing system such as in the United States," Nanda said.

"All houses all over India have been located. This was completed last year," he said, patting one of a housing report on his desk.

The census will inevitably be out of date before it is completed. A recent World Bank report said India adds as many people each year as live in Nepal or Australia.

Nanda said India's population grew at a rate of between two and 2.5 per cent in the 1980s. The birth rate is currently around 30 per thousand, compared with a target of 24.

That translates into one extra mouth every two seconds and it means India will overtake China in the next 50 years as the most populous nation on Earth.

India is already twice as densely populated as China, putting intolerable pressure on the environment, cities and services like water and electricity.

But by Nanda's definition the homeless — those who sleep on pavements, railway platforms, underneath highway overpasses or inside construction piping — number only about 600,000.

They will be counted on the last night of the census. "We have special teams that for three weeks try to figure out where these people are settling down for the night," Nanda said.

The census takers will ride camels across deserts, drive ox-carts through villages, paddle canoes through rainy forests, and trudge along the snowline to get to some homes.

In the Onges tribal area in the Andaman and Nicobar islands, they will lay out food and cigarettes, plant and Indian flag, and retire.

The counting begins when the tribe, thought to have dwindled to around 100, comes out to eat and smoke, and mollified by the gifts, are well-disposed toward the census takers.

The census is supposed to be a snapshot of who is in India between Feb. 9 to 28. So all foreign tourists will be counted — even if they are making a pilgrimage to one of India's many Hindu, Buddhist and Muslim shrines.

"They will be stopped at sunrise on pilgrimage and interviewed," Nanda said.

Burma signs major deal with China

BANGKOK (R) — Burma has agreed to buy arms worth nearly \$7 billion from China, one of the few countries to maintain close ties with Rangoon's army government, diplomats said at the weekend.

They said the two countries signed a long-term deal last year for equipment ranging from jet fighters to small arms. Burma would repay at least half the \$500 million debt in rice and wood.

"This deal takes Burma into the space-age. It completely refurbishes their armed forces," one diplomat said.

Since taking power two years ago the ruling army council has faced an almost total block on Western and Japanese aid.

Governments accused it of killing more than 1,000 protesters when it crushed a major uprising in 1988 and say thousands more dissidents have been jailed since.

To secure income Rangoon has tried to improve relations with neighbours China and Thailand. It has also launched intensive dry season offensives to dislodge ethnic rebels along its borders with those countries.

Diplomats said Peking was one of the few governments to forge closer ties with Rangoon since the uprising. There has been a steady stream of delegations between the two capitals.

In the last year China has given aid for infrastructure projects including a huge bridge across the Rangoon River and a satellite Earth station. Cross border trade has transformed sleepy towns in northern Burma into rich commercial centres.

"China now trades practically everything with Burma so it is logical to trade arms," said one diplomat.

Rangoon-based diplomats said helicopters and gunboats had already arrived. A consignment of F-6 and F-7 jet fighters was waiting to be sent as pilots were still being trained in Peking, one said.

Despite dominating Burma's annual budget the armed forces still rely on weapons bought in the 1960s. The air force is built around Swiss-built Pilatus Turboprop training aircraft. It also has about 30 helicopters supplied by the United States to fight drug trafficking, diplomats said.

Diplomats in Rangoon feared the weapons might be used to quell any repeat of 1988's civilian protests besides continuing assaults on ethnic rebels. There has been no word of the deal in the official media.

Karen insurgents on Burma's eastern border recently said they feared Rangoon had chemical weapons as well as jet fighters, but that neither had been used against them. Diplomats said there was no evidence the Chinese had supplied any chemical weapons.

50 injured as rival Bangladesh parties clash

DHAKA (AP) — Supporters of two rival parties fought with crude bombs and revolvers in the port city of Chittagong, leaving more than 50 people injured and several election offices gutted, police said Sunday.

They said the clashes occurred Saturday in Chittagong between supporters of the Awami League and Jamaat-E-Islami parties who were preparing for the Feb. 27 parliamentary elections.

At least seven people were injured seriously, said police officials in Chittagong, 215 kilometres southeast of Dhaka. Iron rods and sticks also were used in the fighting, said the officials who were contacted by telephone. They spoke on condition of anonymity.

Five shops were looted and 15 makeshift election offices of the two parties set afire or ransacked, police said.

At least five people have been killed and more than 600 others injured in election-related violence since December when the country's interim caretaker government set a date for the elections.

Witnesses in Chittagong said Saturday's clash started when a procession of the fundamentalist Jamaat-E-Islami Party was attacked by Awami League workers near the port.

A series of bombs exploded and several gunshots also were heard, the witnesses said, speaking on condition of anonymity. They also were contacted by telephone.

The violence later spread to other parts of the city, which remained tense Sunday morning with supporters of the two parties moving about in groups armed with iron rods and sticks, the witnesses said.

Police officials did not confirm the witness reports but said no one has been arrested.

At least 90 parties are contesting the elections for 300 parliamentary seats. The elections were called after former President Hussain Muhammad Ershad resigned on Dec. 6, bowing to a massive popular movement.

The seven-week, anti-Ershad campaign was led mostly by university students and backed by a coalition of political parties including the Awami League of Sheikh Hasina.

Slovenia threatens secession

BELGRADE (R) — The Yugoslav Republic of Slovenia said Sunday it was stepping up moves towards secession and warned that the whole of Yugoslavia could disintegrate.

"The secession of Slovenia could trigger a chain reaction among other republics in Yugoslavia," Slovenian President Milan Kucan said in an interview in the Croatian newspaper Vjesnik.

He was speaking after talks between all of Yugoslavia's six constituent republics except Croatia broke up Friday without progress towards an agreement on how to prevent ethnic and political rivalries tearing the country apart.

Croatia and Slovenia, two of the four republics which ended Communist rule last year in free elections, threaten to secede unless Yugoslavia becomes a loose, confederal alliance.

They are opposed by Communist-ruled Serbia, the biggest republic, which wants a centrally ruled federation.

"We are at the most delicate moment. There appears to be no solution," a Western diplomat said.

Kucan, one of Slovenia's most respected politicians, said the breakdown of talks showed that even a confederal alliance was impossible now between all six republics.

He also said that Slovenia's centre-right government would propose formal procedures on separation to its parliament on Feb. 20 and that the Alpine region bordering Austria, Hungary and Italy would be independent by next year.

"I think it is perfectly natural that Croatia would seek independence soon after Slovenia achieves independence. It is only a question of when both will happen," Kucan told Vjesnik.

"The position of Croatia within Yugoslavia is more complex than Slovenia's. But the thesis that Yugoslavia can survive without Slovenia and not without Croatia is not acceptable."

Relations between Yugoslavia's many ethnic groups have rarely been good since the Balkan federation was created in 1918 after the fall of the Austro-Hungarian empire in World War I.

Relations deteriorated after the death of Communist ruler Josip Broz Tito in 1980 after 35 years in power and nationalism rose sharply last year during the first free elections in the six republics since World War II.

U.S.-Soviet row threatens CFE accord ratification

VIENNA (R) — Negotiations on reducing conventional forces in Europe resume this week under the cloud of a superpower row which threatens to block ratification of a milestone arms-cutting accord.

The 22 nations involved in the conventional forces in Europe (CFE) talks will hold their first session since Nov. 18, when they concluded an historic treaty slashing their arsenals of tanks, artillery and other non-nuclear arms.

But as negotiators returned to Vienna to start work on another treaty cutting troop levels, the Soviet Union was under attack for trying to circumvent the arms accord and the United States was threatening to block ratification.

Diplomats from the 16 members of NATO and six countries in the almost-defunct Warsaw Pact met in committees Monday and held their first plenary session Thursday.

The most serious Western charge against Moscow is that it reclassified three army mechanised divisions with about 1,000 tanks as navy coastal units — excluded from the CFE treaty and not liable to destruction.

"If you accept the principle, they could call all their forces naval and put them all outside the treaty," a Western delegate said.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker said last week that the treaty should not be sent to the U.S. Senate for ratification until Moscow settled the dispute over classification.

Failure to ratify the treaty would make it difficult to conclude other arms control agreements, including strategic arms reduction talks (START) treaty which would cut strategic nuclear weapons, Baker said.

But Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman Vitaly Churkin said: "We feel any problems that might have arisen over the conventional arms control treaty will be resolved and we feel confident it will be ratified and implemented."

The West also alleges that Moscow has moved thousands of tanks and other equipment east of the Urals, outside the CFE zone, to avoid having to destroy them under the treaty.

Moscow argues that most of the equipment was withdrawn from Central Europe in a unilateral move announced by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in 1988, before the talks began.

But Western delegates say there was evidence that some of the arms were moved during the negotiations and even after the accord was signed.

Soviet officials have assured their negotiating partners that the arms are intended to modernise those in the East, and that the old equipment will then be destroyed.

"We are going to keep after them on this," one Western delegate said, "to find out how much will be destroyed, how much will be used, and what it will be used for."

Another less serious problem for the West was that Moscow appeared to have declared less equipment on the ground than expected, Western officials said.

Washington seeks more time to close bases in Philippines

MANILA (R) — The United States said Sunday it would be able to help the Philippines better economically if given more time to phase down its military presence in the country.

But it stressed that, if necessary, it could fight any aggression and prevail without need for a single American soldier on Philippine soil.

Chief U.S. negotiator Richard Armitage made the statement on arrival in Manila for the fifth round of talks on the future of U.S. military bases in this former American colony.

The U.S. lease on Clark Air Base, Subic Naval base and four smaller installations expires in September.

Manila wants control of Clark when the lease ends and has proposed a five-to-seven year phase-out for Subic, considered the most important of the six facilities. Washington has asked for a 10 to 12-year transition period.

"As a practical matter we have said that the longer the U.S. has to restructure its presence ... the better we are able to provide security and economic assistance to the Philippines and fulfil our bilateral and regional security responsibilities," Armitage said in a statement.

"Yet there is one point I am obliged to make absolutely clear: The United States, as a Pacific power, can survive, prosper and, when faced with aggression, prevail without having to station a single soldier, airman or sailor on Philippine soil."

Hopes rise for Mozambique peace

CHIMOIO, Mozambique (R) — A ceasefire has held for five weeks on Mozambique's two main transport routes and hopes are rising for a full peace pact to end 15 years of civil war.

But prospects of a lasting peace would be dashed by unrest among thousands of hungry refugees as drought grips one of the world's poorest countries, peacekeeping officials say.

"There has been war for so many years that it's difficult for people to believe in peace yet," said Lieutenant-Colonel Pascual Cardines, leader of an International Joint Verification Commission (JVC) group monitoring the December ceasefire.

But he said his group had encountered no violations of the agreement, in force since Jan. 5, between Mozambique National Resistance (Renamo) rebels, Mozambique government forces and neighbouring Zimbabwe.

The truce covers the road, rail and oil pipeline from the Indian Ocean port of Beira to landlocked Zimbabwe and a second line from the capital, Maputo, to southern Zimbabwe.

Renamo has promised to stop attacks in three kilometre strips on each side of these trade arteries if Zimbabwean soldiers stop fighting on the government side and stay inside the three-kilometre zones.

Zimbabwean soldiers on the line from Beira say the big problem in the coming months will be refugee unrest.

Rains have failed this season, and maize and tobacco crops along the Beira Corridor are dying in the heat.

But as word spreads that the zone is safe, hungry refugees are flocking in from the dangerous hinterland.

Reassured by the presence of Zimbabwean army camps every few miles, they are building grass huts in the fields of wilting maize and trying to grow their own crops. A few tawny guns.

"Many people here are hungry. This year there's been no rain at all. Next year it will be a tragedy," said Cardines, whose men monitor the Beira line around Chimoio, about 80 kilometres east of the Zimbabwe border.

He said refugee violence would complicate his job.

"It's very difficult to distinguish if there's a criminal attack or if it's an attack by Renamo," he said. "There are a lot of weapons unaccounted for here. I've heard there are one and a half million of them."

In Maputo, a gun costs a mere \$20.

The mood of hope engendered by the truce is fragile, and peace talks in Rome broke down in late January when Renamo rejected a decision by the international commission monitoring the accord to include the towns of Maputo, Beira and Chimoio in the ceasefire zone.

The commission said Renamo relies were probably responsible for six out of eight alleged violations reported on the Beira Corridor and the route to Maputo.

Renamo attacked and closed a third transport route, the Tete Corridor to Malawi, as soon as Zimbabwean soldiers there pulled back in late December.

Young royals act insensitively in wartime — U.K. paper

LONDON (AP) — The Sunday Times accused Britain's younger royals of "insensitivity" for vacationing and partying in the shadow of the Gulf war and, in a rare response, Buckingham Palace offered a defence.

The blistering editorial, which also attacked the monarchy's financial privileges, said many of the royals showed little sense of proportion by maintaining their wealthy lifestyles while soldiers risked their lives.

"The queen should put a stop to it," the newspaper said.

It singled out the Duchess of York, daughter-in-law to Queen Elizabeth II, for taking a ski trip just before the war began on Jan. 17, and her husband, Prince Andrew, for playing golf in Spain while serving with the Royal Navy. Buckingham Palace, which rarely responds to press criticism, took action by the time the newspaper hit the streets Saturday night, producing a litany of public appearances and visits to servicemen by the queen and her family members who receive state incomes.

But the newspaper said such appearances — at bases in Germany and in Britain, as well as Prince Charles' trip to Saudi Arabia to see the troops — were not enough.

It said the family shouldn't give up all social life but "war-time does demand a sense of proportion and a degree of decorum out of respect" for soldiers.

"On the home front, too many of the royals and their entourages ... carry on regardless with their peacetime lifestyles, parading a mixture of upper-class decadence and insensitivity which disgusts the public and demeans the monarchy," said the newspaper, which is independent politically.

"The queen, of course, has behaved impeccably," it said, adding that Princess Diana had done her bit by visiting servicemen's families. Diana is married to Charles, the heir to the throne.

"It is the exploits and public demeanor of the minor royals and nearby royals which causes most offence," it added, criticising Lord Linley, the queen's nephew — who it said posed for the press in lipstick and fancy dress on his 29th birthday — and Viscount Althorp, Diana's younger brother, who publicly confessed to adultery.

A palace spokesman said Linley, the son of the queen's sister Princess Margaret, receives no state income and Althorp is not a member of the royal family.

The newspaper said it was unfortunate that no member of the royal family was actively serving in the war.

Recalling the Duke of York's service with the Royal Navy during the Falklands War, it said, "this time his ship is far enough away from the war to allow him recently to enjoy a couple of days' golf on a sunny Spanish links."

The newspaper also said a growing number of people question the monarchy, and pointed out that the queen pays no tax on a vast income. The monarchy's financial privileges "are beyond justification today," the editorial said.

For many years after World War II, the royal family was revered as an institution and an ideal family by most Britons. Reflecting this respect, the press followed an unwritten code that dictated they be treated with discretion.

But in recent years, changing custom, heightened publicity of their lives and the divorce of Princess Margaret and other negative events have fuelled both open criticism of their lifestyles and the institution itself.

Gold worth \$500,000 found in aircraft toilets

DHAKA — Customs officials at Dhaka Airport have recovered smuggled gold worth half a million U.S. dollars, police said. The gold, wrapped in paper, was found in the rear toilets of two planes belonging to the Bangladesh airline Biman, they said. The flights arrived from Singapore and Dubai. Those passengers suspected of trying to smuggle the gold managed to slip out of the airport, one officer told reporters.

Naomi Judd doing well despite fight against hepatitis

NASHVILLE, Tennessee (AP) — Country music singer Naomi Judd, of the mother-daughter duo the Judds, is doing well despite a battle against chronic hepatitis, a spokesman says. Judd, 45, and daughter, Wynonna, announced last fall that the older singer will have to retire from performing because of the illness. Chronic hepatitis is a liver ailment that can be fatal. But, in the meantime, she is continuing to entertain. "Naomi's health is good at this point," spokesman Chuck Thompson said Friday. "Obviously, she's got an illness, but she's adjusting her schedule to take care of that. The duo have concerts scheduled through November, he said. After that Naomi Judd says she will retire. The duet's hit records include their current Love Can Build a Grandpa, and Mama, He's Crazy.

Gabor, policeman settle lawsuit

LOS ANGELES (R) — Zsa Zsa Gabor, who was jailed last year for slapping a policeman, has settled out of court a \$10 million lawsuit he filed, a lawyer for the officer said Friday. The lawyer, Richard Thomas, would not reveal if any money was involved, but he said of the policeman, Paul Kramer: "My client is very satisfied with the settlement." A spokesman for Gabor said the actress had always proclaimed her innocence in the affair. Gabor was jailed for three days last year after she was convicted of slapping Kramer, a motorcycle policeman. He had stopped her while she was driving her Rolls-Royce in June 1989. In his lawsuit, Kramer, who is two metres tall, accused Gabor of causing emotional distress, of slander and of assault and battery. Gabor claimed Kramer was abusive.

Actress charged with drunken driving

LOS ANGELES (R) — Tinseltown's hit television series Cagney and Lacey, has been charged with drunken driving, a police spokeswoman said. Lacey, 44, who played Mary Beth Lacey in the series, was arrested in Los Angeles on Jan. 14 on suspicion of drunken driving. She will appear in court Monday. If convicted, Lacey could be fined \$390, placed on probation for three years and ordered to take part in an alcohol counselling programme. Lacey is due to return to New York's Broadway in April to resume her role of Mama Rose in the musical Gypsy.

Boys held on charge of raping 13-year-old

LAKE WORTH (R) — Seven elementary school boys ranging in age from 9 to 13 were being held by juvenile authorities Friday on charges of raping a 13-year-old schoolmate, court officials said. Nine boys were charged in the incident, which allegedly took place at the girl's home, but the youngest, aged 9, and one other suspect were released to their parents. At a hearing, Palm Beach County Circuit Judge Howard Berman allowed the two to go home because the only statements linking them to the crime were made by the other boys. Court official said the group is alleged to have dragged the victim into her bedroom and raped her. Parents of the boys said they were shocked by the charges. "This is pretty serious, especially for the young boys," said the mother of the eight-year-old. "I can't believe it is happening, but it has." All of the children involved were pupils at the Barton Elementary School at the time, but the victim was immediately transferred to another school.